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ABSTRACT

This document includes five papers on teaching reading skills to illiterate adults. The first discusses the stages of development in acquiring reading skills--introduction, application, and mastery; and suggests two steps which should be taken with reference to reading instruction for illiterate adults--sub groups within the target population (Indians, Negroes, etc.) must be described and defined, and a set of adult criterion education tasks must be identified. The second discusses studies which have been made of several literacy programs; attached is a bibliography and a detailed listing of objectives at five reading levels in teaching vocabulary, comprehension, and study skills. The third paper discusses determining reading levels of adult students and the problems of testing. Another describes an adult education approach to reading instruction, including a controlled environment, meeting basic needs, prevention of any failure, and an approach which is relevant to adult experience. The final paper covers the selection and use of adult reading materials. (EB)

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"Everyone Has The Right To Read"

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TEACHING READING TO SOCIALLY AND EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED ADULTS

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Reading is a process of gaining meaning from print. The meanings derived are as much a function of what the reader brings to the print from his own experience as what the author has encoded. There are, then, several considerations crucial to the complete understanding of the problems involved in teaching reading to socially and educationally disadvantaged adults. The purpose of this paper is to outline these considerations as we presently understand them and to outline briefly the stages of development in acquiring reading skill. It is hoped that this paper will serve as a background against which meaningful discussions can be held during other sessions.

Reading As A Facet of Communication

The most unique trait man has developed which distinguishes him from other species is language. With it he communicates with his fellows. Language develops early in humans; by the time most children reach school age, they have, or should have developed a working command of oral language. As Meredith (1964) states,

> "This may amount to many hundreds of specific articulatory skills, a range of conventional interpretations for each, a flexible command of numerous patterns of syntactic combinations, and a command of intonation and tempo adapted to many recurrent emotional and social situations. Thus, linguistically, children of school age have already mastered thousands of operations and have established in their brains a sizeable working population of mechanisms for the production and interpretation of oral language."

It is upon this base that the skill of reading is established.

Unlike the learning of oral language, which is essentially an integral and natural part of the process of the early growth and development of humans, the learning of reading is highly formalized in our society. So important is the mastery of this skill to the maintenance of our urban-centered technological society that the teaching of reading is, from the beginning, placed in the hands of professionals. The operations involved in reading are not inborn biologically guaranteed functions. They are socially imposed cultural functions, representing a demand by society that all its members shall participate in its communications. We should not underestimate the magnitude of the task which society imposes, nor fail to imagine the repercussions in the individual in shaping his concept of society itself. This is a compulsory social transaction in which the full force of cultural history is canalized in the operations of the teacher. A written or printed word is a coded projection on paper of a familiar articulate and significant sound. The most important cultural achievement of mankind is packed into this coding process.

By mastering the skill of reading, the individual possesses a key which enables him to satisfy society's demand that he understand its communications on a day-to-day basis, but more significantly he possesses the key which can unlock the doors to his whole cultural history. It is this sense of identity with the society and his place in it (which he gains by reading its communications) which enables modern American man to survive and to prevail.

As with any other compulsory social transaction, there are penalties for the individual who cannot or will not comply. One of the most striking aspects of educational research is the frequency with which reading disability is associated with almost every form of social deviancy: hostility and aggressive school behavior, school-dropouts, and delinquency in adolescents; neuroses, psychoses and serious anti-social behavior in adults. The prisons are full of non-readers. The conclusion is not that because these phenomena are found to be closely associated in individuals that the one caused the other. Correlation in this sense does not necessarily imply causation. However, reading may be thought of as a tool for learning, learning as the route to education, education as "operational sociology"; certainly in this progression when the fundamental tool is unavailable, the socialization process cannot be fully completed and this must have consequences in the life of the illiterate.

One of the beliefs of most adult illiterates is that they are somehow not capable of learning, especially reading. They have become convinced, probably because of their unsuccessful past experiences in education, that they do not possess the necessary intellectual equipment which would enable them to master this complex skill. Many have given up hope and are afraid to try for fear of failing again, which would only serve to confirm their previous unsuccessful experiences. These persons develop avoidance behaviors and a wide array of projections and rationalizations in order to protect themselves from the unpleasant truth of their illiteracy.

The tragedy of this is that we know almost anyone can learn to read. The great majority in our society do learn to read. They learn at different ages and by different methods. They show a wide range of intelligence - even imbeciles can now be taught to read. Many normal readers show a wide range of physical abnormalities - even the blind and deaf are routinely taught to read. There seems to be no single defect which by itself can be an insuperable obstacle to reading.

You cannot know what it is like not to be able to read. Because you read, the fact excludes you from truly knowing. It is a curious characteristic of the mind that one cannot recreate the state of mind which existed before something became known. Therefore you can only imagine the frustration, embarrassment, degradation and constant sense of personal inadequacy which must be a part of the identity of a man in America who cannot read.

Necessary Conditions for Learning

There are several fundamental concepts in learning which must be applied in any environment where socially and educationally disadvantaged adults are to be given meaningful educational opportunities. First, individuals need to become convinced that it is desirable to change from their present educational status to a better one. To the literate person this seems completely obvious; but, it is too often assumed that everyone naturally wants to be literate. The fact is that human beings rarely change their attitudes or behaviors unless they feel a compelling personal need to do so. Therefore, the undereducated adult must be moved from a state of static self-acceptance to a state of anticipation concerning the adoption of a new set of attitudes about the learning process. Second, failure must be eradicated from the learning environment. Failure or threat of failure will only result in avoidance behavior which inhibits learning. No living organism will continue to emit goal oriented behavior in the face of continuous and unremitting failure. Rather, each appropriate response emitted, insofar as it is possible to do so, should be promptly reinforced. In this way the individual, from the time he begins, experiences nothing but success and thereby amasses evidence of his own competence in learning. This valid success experience is the only evidence most individuals will accept about themselves which will produce changed attitudes. And, since the evidence is based on personal behavior, the individual is more likely to further modify his behavior patterns in the indicated direction. Third, it is necessary to individualize the learning program for each person. There are several reasons for doing this. The traditional classroom format is one with which the learner associates all of his former frustrations and failures; therefore it is probably threatening to him. The range of educational levels is wider among groups of socially and educationally disadvantaged adults than in normally constituted groups. There is no way to group adults homogeneously in most situations. Teachers, therefore, cannot employ group teaching practices with any precision, particularly in subjects which require reading as a basic tool for learning. An educational approach which encompasses these three basic concepts is the Learning Center approach as described by Mocker and Sherk (1969).

As was stated, the learning concepts outlined above are considered fundamental and minimal conditions for the learning environment. Much more could be added to these basic concepts. Elaboration of these ideas is contained in an article by Price and Horne (1969).

Stages in the Acquisition of Reading Skill

No one ever learned to play tennis by merely observing the game. One must first learn the fundamentals, practice the fundamentals, apply the fundamentals, while participating in the game, and then formulate a style of play based on mastery of the fundamentals which results in occasional victory. The real joy of the sport is in participation.

Reading, thought of as a skill, is no different. The real value of reading to the individual is in being able to read anything he wants to read for his own private purposes; this is participation in terms of meaningful reading.

There are three stages of development in the process of acquiring any skill including reading. They are: 1) Introduction, 2) Application, 3) Mastery. Any program devised for the purpose of enabling socially and educationally disadvantaged adults to learn to read should encompass these stages. This means the administrator should make available the necessary instruction and material at each stage so the natural progress of the learner is not interrupted or terminated prematurely.

The Introduction stage in learning to read has at least three major characteristics. During this stage decoding the symbols becomes the learner's primary preoccupation. As he deals with the simplest and most common word and letter combinations in the language, the second characteristic of this stage should become clear to him. It is his realization that reading really is a process of turning printed words back into "talk." In other words, the neophyte reader suddenly begins to connect the visual signs of language symbols with the oral signs he already knows. It may not seem significant to the layman, but seeing this transpire is one of the true rewards to be derived in teaching reading. At the same time the learner begins to realize that, because of his large experience background, he brings much to the page which is useful in helping to interpret and analyze what the author has written. This is akin to reflective thinking and has its origin in the very early phases of learning to read. The Introduction stage in reading is accomplished when the reader masters the recognition-at-sight of between 500-1000 common words. It may take between 125 and 300 hours of actual learning time, and his attempts at oral and silent reading are usually hesitant and dysfluent, much the same as would be the novice tennis player's first awkward attempts at playing the game. Similarly, there is the factor of "talent" which, in the beginning may account for the relative ease or difficulty which some individuals experience and which lengthens or shortens the time necessary to accomplish the Introductory Stage of reading. At the end of this stage the novice's average reading performance would approximate that of pupils in the third to fourth grades. A major difference, however, is the maturity and sensitivity of the adult learner. This is a crucial difference and should not be overlooked. Many have mistakenly thought that the methods and materials appropriate for teaching third and fourth grade pupils would be appropriate for teaching adults whose reading skills were developed to that same level. Adults will not tolerate being taught as if they were children, nor will they accept the same instructional materials. The topical content of that which is used must be of a higher interest level and must in some way fit into their current frame of reference. Furthermore, the materials must be sequentially arranged from easy to more difficult, and plans must be included for the systematic introduction and practice of specific skills of successively increasing complexity both in word analysis and comprehension.

The Application stage in the acquisition of reading skill is largely characterized by independent practice. This is the time when "learning to read" becomes transformed to "reading to learn." The basic skills of word recognition are applied to increasingly more difficult words of many syllables and to words whose meanings are shaded by their contextual settings. Comprehension of simple sentences is extended to longer and more involved sentences. Technical vocabularies which are particular to the various content areas are learned. The organizational patterns and styles of expression which are peculiar to the different content subjects are also learned. Whereas in the Introductory stage the majority of the time is spent in absorbing instruction and the minority of the time is spent in practice, the Application stage is that period when learners' efforts are mainly devoted to refinement and extension of the basic skills through actually practicing the reading act. Emphasis in this phase is placed upon skills of interpretation and critical analysis of content, upon efficient use of reference sources such as the dictionary, and upon the effective utilization of information gained through reading. In this stage, a certain degree of control over the reading process has been attained which can be observed in oral reading performance and in silent reading by the increased rate of reading with no loss of comprehension; in short, a reflection of the power the reader has gained over language in the medium of print. The length of time the individual spends in the Application stage is indeterminate. Many, in fact, never get beyond this stage. In grade level equivalence, it may be thought of as that stage beyond fourth grade level through the senior high school level of reading skill.

The Mastery stage of reading is similar to that of the mastery stage of any other skill. Performance at this stage is judged by fluency and grace. The fundamentals operate automatically. In tennis, for example, the mastery stage is where the player uses the basic skills for a different purpose - to defeat his opponent. In reading, the mastery stage is where the individual uses reading as a means of solving problems, for pleasure, to attain his vocational goals, to fulfill his citizenship responsibilities, etc. At this stage reading is a means through which one may enrich his life in some way. Just as the master of any physical skill has a variety of techniques in his repertoire for the application of his skill, so the master of reading skill has a variety of techniques which he is able to employ efficiently and confidently to attain his purpose through reading.

Reading in ABE Programs of Tomorrow

In many ways, teaching adults to read is a more complex task than teaching children to read. One powerful reason is that adults are more complex organisms than are children. Adults have more hang-ups (known in Skinnerian terms as response-records) than children have and therefore more things can go wrong in their learning sequences.

The obvious implication stemming from the complexity aspect of adult learning is that more factors have to be taken into account in planning educational programs for adults than for children. This is particularly true in teaching reading.

Two immediate steps should be taken with reference to the effective teaching of reading to under-educated adults.

First, we as educators of adults must define and describe the recognized sub groups of adults who comprise the target population of the program by providing explicit inclusion-exclusion criteria and identifying parameters and parameter values which differentiate the sub groups. As we presently operate programs, we rarely give more than lip service to the cultural and linguistic differences between ghetto blacks and whites, Mexican-Americans, Indians, and Appalachian mountain folk, with reference to the reading programs we provide. The programs are all pretty much alike. By insisting that we describe the target population specifically as suggested above, it is more likely that we will take these factors into account when we program for them. At present we do not have enough research capability in ABE to linguistically and ethnically describe and define the sub group of adults who comprise our target populations. Therefore our planning is often inadequate and our programs don't work.

Second, we must identify a set of adult criterion education tasks which adequately sample the tasks for which highly favorable returns to the individual and to society can be demonstrated and construct an assessment procedure to validate the choice of those adult education tasks as the performance criterion dimension of the program objective. Since we are considering reading, the question is, what adult reading tasks which adequately sample the tasks in reading for which highly favorable returns to the individual and to society can be found? These tasks then become the criterion reading measures we use rather than the artificial standards now in use. For example, in the field of reading, the following definition would guide the selection of reading skills to be included in ABE reading programs: (rather than the more general reading skills now taught) Reading Task: a real-life incident which creates an internally or externally imposed requirement for an individual to perform a discrete, observable operation which is highly dependent upon his having satisfactorily read a specific passage of written material. Examples of reading tasks are:

(a) looking up a telephone number
(b) following written directions which tell how to assemble a toy or an appliance
(c) responding to a written social invitation
(d) completing a written job application.

By thinking of reading in this way aggregations of discrete reading tasks could be assembled according to a logical or empirical classification scheme. Then, a reading task which represents a class of reading tasks could be used as a measure of mastery of that class of reading tasks. Presumably, the assessment procedure in reading would be composed of criterion tasks.

It may be suggested at this point that we have a long way to go in teaching reading in ABE. We have to get busy to do our homework.

Conclusion

There is no more important educational problem facing us today than the problem of inadequate reading skill among substantial numbers in the population.

In order to be a citizen in full standing, one must be literate. While learning to read does not require mental or physical powers beyond any but a very few in society, the sociological and environmental pre-conditions necessary to enhance the learning of this skill are not well understood. It is important and timely that these opportunities be offered now - that all may learn to read.

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What We Know--What We Don't Know about Reading in ABE

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Much of the content of this paper is from a paper I prepared for a workshop at the University of Chicago. There are, of course, additions to and deletions from that paper; but most important there is a shift in emphasis. Whereas the earlier paper stressed the need for further research, the present paper stresses the implications and limitations of the existing research with regard to teaching. But perhaps it is realistic to restate a disclaimer and a confession.

While my intent in preparing this paper was to limit its scope to the reading aspect of ABE, I am convinced that such a delimitation is not completely realistic. I feel that it is necessary to make this disclaimer for two reasons. First, I am a reading specialist. Consequently, I have a number of biases, the most prominent of which is my belief that in Adult Basic Education reading is most basic. My inclination, then, is to break the reading task into its component skills and get on with the task of teaching the skills in some sensible sequence. While I shall make just such a proposal later in the discussion, I recognize the fact that each adult who comes to the learning situation has certain qualities in common with other adults and other qualities that are unique to him as a person. The reader must be considered just as carefully as the reading task. Second, "reading" is not a content area. If we are to read, we must read about something; and the moment we decide what that something is to be, we have gone beyond the strict skill development aspect of reading. The total context of the ABE program should be considered in selecting content for reading, even at the very early stages of skill development. Thus, while the primary focus in this paper is upon reading as the basic in Adult Basic Education, the adult and his education continue to provide the context.

When one is invited to say _what_ _we_ _know_ about reading in ABE, he is tempted to give a candid, but perhaps overly simplistic, response: We know almost nothing if research results are the accepted bases for knowing and, by that criterion, we have yet to learn even the most fundamental kinds of things regarding reading in ABE. Yet the paradoxical fact is that materials have been written, instructional programs have been designed and illiterate adults have been taught and continue to be taught how to read. Practitioners, unable to afford the luxury of waiting for the establishment of a research base, have made decisions based upon experience, judgment and intuition and they have gotten on with the task, often with remarkable success, of teaching adults to read. The paradox is particularly striking to me because I have long felt that if we were to look only at the conglomerate of research results in the general area of reading--i.e., with all ages and achievement levels, not just illiterate adults--the most tenable implication would be that learning to read is an infinitely complex task at which virtually everyone is ordained to fail. Nevertheless, given even mediocre instruction most of us manage somehow to muddle through.

The suggestion here is not that research be abandoned. Much can be learned from research that is adequately focused. I am suggesting, though, that we be not too quick to condemn and dismiss when a solid base of research does not exist. Very often a research base is added only after a superstructure of practice is well established. While such a procedure may not be efficient, it is real; and it is not limited to the area of reading or adult basic education.

The Research: Results, Implications and Limitations

When Knox (1967) reviewed the existing research and evaluation studies conducted in the United States and Canada related to programs designed to increase adult literacy, he concluded that "There are few conclusions or generalizations regarding Adult Basic Education that are supported by the available research." (p. 6) Nevertheless, he did put down some tentative generalizations in the form of hypotheses in need of further testing. In a sense, Knox's generalizations represent what we hope we know about teaching adults to read. They bear restatement and comment here.

1. "Most illiterate adults can make substantial progress towards functional literacy if at least minimal procedures and adequate time and moderate interest are available."

There is ample evidence, which is reviewed in another section of this paper, that well conceived literacy programs pay off in terms of increased literacy. In general, though, the data available are from groups, not from careful studies of individuals. Thus, we know that on the average adults respond well to literacy training; but we know very little when it comes to making predictions regarding the potential progress of individuals.

> 2. "Adults with low levels of literacy tend to have reading proficiency that is two or three years below their grade level at school learning."

The point is well supported. Years in school is generally a poor index of literacy and it is particularly poor with adults of limited literacy. Another important point is inherent here: Adults who are functionally illiterate are not necessarily the unschooled. Many of them have spent years in school and they need corrective and/or remedial help more than they need beginning reading instruction. We need to develop more effective techniques for finding out what adults in ABE classes know as well as what they do not know.

> 3. "There are few tests that have been developed or adapted for use with illiterate adults. The lack of tests or norms for adults with low literacy that can be used for diagnosis, assessing ability, and criterion measures regarding achievement is a major restriction on both program effectiveness and research."

This, of course, is not a research finding but an observation derived from a review of the existing studies. What we know, then, is that we have a very real need to know more.

> 4. "In spite of recently published materials, there is still a lack of appropriate materials for ABE which have high interest levels but low reading difficulty levels."

While there would be little quarrel with the first three generalizations, some workers would take at least partial exception to the fourth.

Certainly more and better materials can always be put to good use, but the point here is that many materials are available. Lists, with subjective evaluations, have been published by Barnes and Hendrickson (1965), Otto and Ford (1967), Smith, et al (1966) and Minkoff (1967). What is needed even more than additional materials is reasonably efficient means for putting the most appropriate of the existing materials into the hands of each adult learner.

> 5. "There is little evidence of the relative effectiveness for various purposes of the various instructional systems that have been developed for ABE."

The generalization is sound. The few studies that have been done are limited to comparisons of the effects of different instructional systems with essentially similar samples of adult illiterates. But I have a bias: There is no questioning the appeal of the notion that we ought to be able to identify a best instructional system to do a certain specific job with a certain specific group of adults. Yet I seriously question whether such a goal is reasonably attainable. Researchers have spent countless hours and countless dollars trying to identify the best methods and materials for teaching elementary pupils to read and they have failed not only to come to any definite conclusions but also to come to any agreement as to what steps ought to be taken next. I believe the resources in ABE can be channeled to activities more promising than the endless quest for "the best method for the most people." Remedial reading teachers do some of their most effective work with the driver's manual, the telephone book and the Sears, Roebuck catalog. They can do it because they know their students. What we know, it seems to me, is that we need to know each of our students as an individual and that we need to focus our teaching on the needs of individuals.

6. "When teachers carefully follow an instructional system, there is little evidence that levels of teachers education are associated with learner progress."

There is some research support for this generalization; but, probably more important, it has the unequivocal support of logic. If teachers do in fact carefully and faithfully follow the dictates of an instructional system, then the teaching should be reduced to the common denominator of the instructional system. I do not see that as cause for rejoicing because I prefer to think of a teacher as an integral, contributing part of the instructional sequence.

Knox made an interesting comment regarding his generalizations: each of them might have been stated by a thoughtful practitioner without the benefit of the existing research. In fact, one might argue, even while agreeing with all of them, that the generalizations do not represent vital or viable research concerns. We might, for example, learn more and learn it faster by tackling much more specific hypotheses. But that has to do with what we need to know, not what we know now.

By considering the results of some specific studies we can look more explicitly at what we know. We shall consider three types of studies: (1) examinations of the effects of literacy training, (2) comparisons of approaches to instruction, and (3) assessments of programs and teachers.

Effects of Literacy Training

Studies of the effects of literacy training have focused upon the efforts of three distinct groups: private industry, public education, and the armed forces. In reviewing some of the major studies to date, we shall consider the actual results--what we know--the implications--what appears to be so--and the unsolved problems.

Ball (1967) described and evaluated a course in basic education offered at the Chicago Argo Plant of Corn Products as a part of the Methods of Intellectual Development (MIND) project of The National Association of Manufacturers. The 160 hour course was designed to increase the reading, spelling and arithmetic achievement of participants by four grade levels. The participants, Argo employees, attended sessions before or after work shifts on their own time. Training costs were paid by Corn Products. Word Meaning, Spelling and Arithmetic Computation subtests of the Stanford Intermediate battery were used to assess educational levels. The members of the group of 38 men, on the average, were 42 years of age, had completed eight years of school, performed at the fourth to fifth grade level in reading and arithmetic, and had been with Argo for 15 years.

The program was conducted from June to December 1966. Scheduling difficulties cut the instructional time from the anticipated 160 hours to 79 hours. In terms of mean test scores, the group gained the equivalent of 2.6 school grades in word knowledge, 2.2 grades in spelling and 3.2 grades in arithmetic. The gains appeared to accumulate at a steady pace throughout the program. Men whose initial achievement was at the third grade level or lower gained the least; whereas, men whose achievement was at the fourth to eighth grade level gained the most. There was no evidence that the teachers in the program differed in effectiveness. In terms of job qualifications, the participants improved according to the company's "qualification check test" and the conclusion was that the men were in a better position to compete for upgrading in the company. General conclusions were that (a) the participants--according to interviews and subjective impressions--were enthusiastic about the program, and (b) the program offers a viable means for rapidly upgrading the educational levels of employees and job applicants. The results suggest that the literacy skills of employed individuals can effectively be increased _while the individuals remain on the job_.

A Norfolk State College demonstration project in which a group of hard-core unemployed, unskilled workers were given both vocational training and general education was described by Brooks (1964). An unusually sophisticated design was employed to evaluate the training program. Fifty men were assigned to each of four groups: (1) A control group, for which nothing was done. (2) A subsidiary control group, included to test the Hawthorne effect. Members of the group were brought in on a bi-monthly basis for guidance and occupational information. (3) A subsidiary experimental group, which was given vocational training only. (4) An experimental group, which was given intensive instruction in general education--language arts, number skills, occupational information and human relations--in addition to the same vocational training given to the subsidiary experimental group. The functionally illiterate men in the experimental group gained, on the average, 1.87 years of reading ability in the first six months of instruction. The conclusion was that general education meshed with vocational training and resulted in an effective training program for the hard-core unemployed. Placement and on-the-job follow-up exceeded expectations.

Brown and Newman (1970) have suggested that the Norfolk project is significant for four salient reasons: (1) the focus of the project was upon the hard-core unemployed, (2) the design of the evaluation study was exemplary, (3) significant gains were made by hard-to-reach individuals, and (4) the pay-off in terms of employment records after training was impressive.

Much has been written about the Army program for training illiterates during World War II. The program was both massive and remarkably successful. A description and evaluation of the program that was published in 1951 (Goldsberg, 1951) can be briefly summarized here.

The Army program was designed for illiterate, non-English speaking and Grade V men and it was officially in operation from the middle of 1941 through December 1945. Of the participants initially reading at the first grade level, 61.6 per cent were taught to read at the fourth grade level in 12 to 16 weeks. Those who initially placed at higher achievement levels made even more rapid progress. Justifiably, then, the program was judged to be highly successful for its intended purpose; but, of course, the program had a number of attributes that are not present in civilian programs.

Special features of the program that would appear to have had a particularly significant effect in the program or upon its positive evaluation follow:

1. The situation provided strong incentives, e.g., to read letters from home, to write letters home.

2. The Army exercised control over the participants 24 hours per day.

3. The military establishment had access to almost unlimited funds during the war.

4. Qualified instructors and supervisory personnel were readily available.

5. The training of illiterates was a new venture for the Army, so there was no need to struggle with an establishment or with troublesome precedents.

6. Only those men felt to have sufficient mental capacity to benefit from literacy training were accepted. Those who did not progress in the expected manner were honorably discharged from the service. (These, of course, are indulgences not available in most civilian programs.)

7. Special instructional materials and training aids were developed specifically for the program and a counseling program was provided.

8. The pupil-instructor ratio was 15:1 in the academic classes.

9. The training was systematically appraised through a monthly reporting system and continuous inservice training of instructors and supervisors was provided.

10. The goal of the program was achievement at the fourth grade level. (Most workers would agree that such a goal would be unrealistically low for civilian programs at the present time.)

Adequate financial support, availability of qualified staff and resources to develop materials specifically for the program would appear to have contributed substantially to the success of the program. Each of these is, at least in theory, available to a civilian literacy effort.

On the other hand, civilian programs need to spend more time on motivation, integration of literacy skills with economic and social adjustment and the attainment of higher achievement levels. Finally, Goldberg pointed out the fact that the Army had no follow-up program. He recommended that civilian programs devise a follow-up system, limited to mail-outs of reading materials if necessary, to insure that newly acquired skills be used.

Witty (1965) derived eight guidelines for civilian programs from the Army study: (1) use functional methods and materials, (2) use visual aids, (3) seek strong interest and motivation, (4) state objectives and specific goals, (5) correlate activities, (6) keep class enrollment small, (7) use supplementary materials to reinforce academic skills, and (8) use consistent methodology and demonstrate success to enrollees at every step in the training. I doubt than any ABE teacher would quarrel with any of those guidelines. Putting the guidelines into practice might, however, prove a bit more troublesome.

Taken together, the three studies demonstrate the positive results that can be obtained when adequate resources are brought to bear. Other studies of specific programs have, of course, been reported and the continued reporting of similar studies is to be encouraged. Aside from establishing a baseline of demonstrated success, the reporting of such studies puts experiences on record for the guidance of those who follow. Some examples of worthwhile observations from three substantial studies are: (1) The Oakland Public Schools Research Department (1966) had difficulty with the evaluation of a neighborhood center program because of the ceiling effect imposed by the post-test employed. The observation reflects a general concern about the limitations of the ABE tests in use. (2) Walther and Ferguson (1966) reported good results from an "area-of-interest" approach to reaching students in literacy classes. The approach could be the first step toward programs that attract and motivate students by appealing to special interests and extrinsic motivation. (3) Patten and Clark (1968) reported that the i/t/a (initial teaching alphabet) approach was effective in improving the reading achievement of adults below the fourth grade ability level.

Comparisons of Approaches to Instruction

As already noted, little is now known about the relative effectiveness for different purposes of the various instructional systems that have been developed. The studies reviewed here represent attempts to learn more about the effectiveness of different instructional approaches. Some of them have been very modest in scope, but at least one has taken the broad view and yielded a number of worthwhile implications for practice and for further study.

A comparison of methods was included in the evaluation report of the Basic Education Demonstration Program conducted in Wayne County, Michigan (Detroit University, 1965). Teachers in the exploratory project were given latitude to adjust their methods to the needs of their illiterate and functionally illiterate adult students, but two basic approaches to the teaching of reading were employed: an approach in which the initial teaching alphabet (i/t/a) was used and an approach confined to the use of traditional orthography (t.o.). The 48 adults who completed the course--which met for three hours a day, five days a week for eight weeks--had a mean age of 44 years and the median highest grade completed was 5.5.

Conclusions and implications most relevant to reading were as follows:

1. Eight weeks is not sufficient time for a basic education program. (It should be noted that the participants were unemployed Negro males, many from the rural South. The differences in the dialects of participants and teachers was felt to present a major problem.)

2. The participation of students in a basic education program should be justified in terms of their capacity for probable growth. (This is a recurring theme in the ABE literature. Actually, there is no reason to expect slow learners to respond any more positively to compacted adult literacy courses then they do to instruction in the public schools. Potential participants in basic education programs should be carefully screened and they should be assigned to differentiated programs where the pace and expectations are adapted to their capacities.)

3. Testing is necessary to assess students' capacity for educational growth at the program's end. (Participants should not be abandoned at the end of a program. Those with the capacity for more growth should at least be identified.)

4. Extensive pre-program training should be conducted for the instructional staff regardless of academic background and teaching experience.

5. The i/t/a approach facilitates the teaching of reading to illiterate and functionally illiterate adults. The t.o. approach tends to satisfy the needs of adults with a pre-instruction achievement level of fourth grade or better.

6. Teacher-developed materials are a must for any program because they can meet immediate needs better than published materials.

7. A qualified person should be responsible for developing and ad-

ministering intermittent tests in reading and arithmetic. (Data from such tests would provide a constant check upon both group and individual progress.)

Henney (1964) reported a study designed to determine (a) the extent to which functionally illiterate adults can increase their reading performance with special reading instruction by a phonic method, and (b) whether subjects taught individually and in groups will differ in reading gains. The subjects, all inmates at a state reformatory, were assigned to one of three matched groups: Experimental Group I received reading instruction by a phonics method one hour each day for 20 sessions in a group situation. Experimental Group II received instruction of the same type and duration but on an individual basis. The Control Group attended the regular elementary classes at the institution. General reading was pre- and post-tested with the Gray Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs, and specific difficulties were examined with the Gates-McKillop Diagnostic Reading Tests. Conclusions were as follows:

1. Age, IQ and beginning reading level do not affect the progress and rate of improvement in reading performance of functionally illiterate adults. (The conclusion is based upon the results of this particular study. It is not completely in accord with the conclusions reached by other investigators.)

2. The family phonics system is an effective tool for improving the reading ability of functionally illiterate adults.

3. The system is as effective in a group situation as in an individual teaching situation. (This conclusion, too, is based upon the results of the study reviewed here. But perhaps when the approach is predetermined

it really doesn't matter whether the instruction is given to groups or individuals.)

Steuart (1968) compared the effectiveness of two widely used instructional systems with Spanish-speaking adults who were functionally illiterate in English. The subjects--a total of 70 at the beginning of the experiment--were enrolled in two separate ABE programs, and half of the enrollers from each program were assigned to each treatment. Approximately 50 hours of instruction designed to build literacy in English as a second language was given. The two instructional systems employed were the Sullivan Programmed Reading for Adults--characterized as a linguistic approach--and the Mott Basic Language Skills Program--characterized as an analytic phonics approach at the lower levels. Salient conclusions were as follows:

1. The Mott and Sullivan programs are both effective in teaching functionally illiterate adults English as a second language.

2. On the average, the greater a subjects' initial competence in English, the greater his mean gain on the post-test measure of reading ability.

3. Despite the divergence in the format and content of the two programs, they were equally effective.

Heding (1967) described a project in which teachers developed their own instructional materials. They used i/t/a as well as traditional orthography. On the basis of the data, the following adult characteristics and implications for constructing material were suggested. (Brown & Newman, 19

"1. Seventy-five per cent of adults who have completed 5 years of school or less were 45 years or older, 55% were male. 75% Caucasian of mixed ethnic backgrounds.

IMPLICATION: Materials should be non-ethnic in approach and oriented to middle-aged and older students.

2. Their background is predominantly rural, but they live in an urban environment. Greater numbers live in the most populous, heavily-industrialized states. Approximately 1/3 of prison populations are illiterate.

IMPLICATION: Materials should be urban oriented but with a rural flavor.

3. Adults are able to learn basic verbal skills more rapidly than children and can learn them about equally well at all ages, but many experience difficulty in learning quantitative skills. Illiterate populations are characterized by a substantially lower level of learning aptitude than the general population, are vocationally unskilled, and possess many psychological, sociological, and physical characteristics which block motivation and learning.

IMPLICATION: Use tangible, utilitarian, practical interests and motivations as central foci of teaching materials and methodologies.

4. Interests and motivations of illiterate adults are heavily affected by and strongly related to vocations (income producing activities), family, community, civic-life, self-improvement, and socio-cultural concerns.

IMPLICATION: Methods and materials should be developed around these interests and teaching should reflect knowledge of them.

5. Mental set, lack of confidence, sensitivity to failure, low self-concept, and related conditions all affect the learning rate of adult illiterates.

IMPLICATION: Content and organization have to be oriented to change these conditions in the direction of promoting learning."

Although student gains in reading were not dramatic after 90 hours of instruction, the study represents a pioneering attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of materials developed for specific purposes with a specific group. More efforts like it are needed.

Krebs (1966) described an action research effort to examine the effectiveness of a small group programmed approach and an eclectic, volunteer tutor approach to teaching reading skills to illiterate adults. Again, the study represents an attempt to examine the effectiveness of local efforts.

The attempt in a study in Buffalo by Brown and Newman (1968) was to (a) examine the effects of a modified alphabet and adult- and vocationally-oriented materials, (b) field test the effects of pre-service and in-service training, and (c) develop a predictive instrument. Materials from the Missouri project (Heding, 1967) were used as core material but they were extended considerably to meet the needs of the Buffalo group. According to Brown and Newman (1970) results of the study suggest:

"1. The desirability of using adult and vocationally oriented materials with this population.

2. The desirability of pre- and in-service training for the teachers of ABE classes.

3. The possibility of using the initial teaching alphabet with ABE students.

4. The need to be aware of the peculiar learning problems of the city-core illiterate; this demands a special sensitivity in teachers which

too often is not properly emphasized, valued, or taught."

The most extensive and widely cited field test of ABE materials was conducted by Greenleigh and Associates (1966). Griffith (1967) has pointed out a number of limitations of the study--e.g., neither the participants nor the teachers in the study were chosen at random, adequate control groups were not included, a substantial number of the general findings reported are in fact observations or subjective generalizations--but he has also pointed out its considerable value: ". . .within this report the careful reader will find some information on virtually every variable which must be considered in rigorous research on adult basic education." The study merits detailed review and comment here.

The general purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of four widely used, commercially prepared systems for teaching reading to economically dependent adults, 18 years of age or older, with reading ability below the fifth grade level. The four systems were:

1. Learning to Read and Spell (American Incentive to Read)
2. Reading in High Gear (Science Research Associates, Inc.)
3. Mott Basic Language Skills Program (Allied Education Council)
4. Systems for Success (Follett Publishing Company)

The systems were implemented by teachers with three distinctly different backgrounds of preparation: (1) trained teachers, preferably experienced in adult education, (2) college graduates, and (3) high school graduates. Each of the teachers was given preservice orientation and training, conducted by a representative of the publisher, with the particular system he would be using.

The field test was conducted in three states, New York, New Jersey and California. In each state, three classes for each of the four systems were set up and taught by teachers from each of the three levels of preparation designated. Thus, there were 36 classes with an initially anticipated total enrollment of 540 in each state, but actual enrollments tended to vary by state. The classes met for five hours a day, five days a week, for seventeen weeks. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and Gray's Oral Reading Paragraphs were used at the beginning, midpoint and end of the training to measure progress in reading. In addition, questionnaires and periodic observations were used to obtain data on attitudes, classroom practices, etc.

Twenty major findings were listed in the report; but, as Griffin pointed out, more than half of them were observations and subjective generalizations rather than results derived directly from analyses of the data. In summarizing, I have rearranged and combined. My comments are set off by parentheses.

1. Virtually all of the students made some gains in reading; but there were no significant differences in student gain scores by system. While some of the students taught by each system improved to the eighth grade level in reading, none of the four systems employed brought the majority of students to that level in the seventeen weeks alloted. (The main finding--that there were no significant differences between systems--is commonplace. The best method is as elusive as the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.)

2. There were no significant differences in Gray Oral gain scores attributable to level of teacher preparation. There were, however, significant differences by teacher-level on certain Iowa subtests, and in each

instance the difference favored the high school graduate teacher. It is interesting to note that on the basis of observations, the certified teachers were most skillful in dealing with learning problems, grouping students and class management. While the research design restricted teachers to the publisher's instructions, two of the systems encourage teacher innovation and the use of supplementary materials. Nevertheless, the certified teachers using those systems did not produce significantly greater gains. Thus, the report questions the relative importance of accepted class management techniques in teaching adult basic literacy classes. (Another finding given in the report, however, is that teachers need more supervision and inservice training than they received during the field test. Apparently there was some feeling that teachers have something to contribute to the learning process. Personally, I wonder what would have happened if a group of experienced teachers had been permitted to freely adapt the system used and to proceed on an individualized basis. I wonder, too, about the effect of the fact that most of the high school level teachers and most of the participants were Negro. Certainly there is a great need for clarification of the teacher role in ABE classes.)

3. Gains were assessed by instruments not standardized with ABE students. The judgment of both teachers and observers was that actual gains were in excess of the gains indicated by the tests employed. There were other findings regarding tests: (a) The achievement and intelligence tests used were not geared to the knowledge base of the ABE group. (b) Paper-and-pencil tests, particularly those with IBM response sheets, are threatening and difficult to use. This was so despite the fact that the teachers had received careful training in the administration of the tests

from a publisher's representative. (c) There is need to teach ABE students how to take paper-and-pencil tests for such tests are encountered frequently in seeking employment. (Perhaps we should all be appalled that such a finding comes at the end of the study. Common sense might have suggested as much--and then something could have been done in time to salvage an important aspect of the study proper.)

4. There was a significant positive relationship between initial and final Gray and Iowa composite scores. There was a highly significant correlation between final Gray scores and gain scores, but no significant relationship between initial Gray scores and gain scores. Students who scored highest on the post-test made the greatest gains, but the gains were not predictable from pre-test scores.

5. Students were almost unanimous in expressing appreciation of their teachers. The majority expressed appreciation for the opportunity to learn basic literacy skills. Most approved of the reading system and the stories to which they were exposed. The conclusion in the report was that students want to read good English and about things "the teacher knows," not necessarily about things they themselves know. Perhaps most important of all, there was evidence from the interviews that the students had learned that they could learn and that the classes had a positive effect upon out-side-of-class behavior.

6. A number of other findings had to do with funding, support of participants and other program management matters.

We shall return to some recommendations from the Greenleigh report later in the discussion.

Assessment of Programs and Teachers

Greenleigh and Associates (1964) conducted an evaluative study of the ABE programs in the state of Illinois. Students, teachers, caseworkers, principals, and head teachers in ABE programs in five counties were interviewed. Of the twenty recommendations, those most relevant to reading are summarized with comment.

1. Local school systems ought to place high priority on replacing evening programs with day programs. (Provision of day programs could help to solve logistical problems for women in particular; but all participants would probably be better able to respond to instruction during the day rather than after the fatiguing activities of the day.)

2. Local school personnel must carefully evaluate the educational potential of ABE students and be ready to develop special classes for the retarded and/or other students with special learning problems. (The need for adequate evaluation techniques and instruments was acute in 1964 and still is in 1970. Efficient placement and instruction of pupils can proceed only from adequate evaluation.)

3. Specific criteria to assist in better teacher selection are needed. Inservice training and supervision are required. ABE teachers should be paid at a somewhat higher rate than normal. (The need to consider the role of the teacher was noted earlier. Inservice training, supervision and premium pay, of course, require money.)

4. All new students should have a physical exam before they enter the ABE program, or, at the very least, vision and hearing tests. (Information regarding vision and hearing is particularly relevant as an antecedent to reading instruction. Provision for correction of difficulties should be

made; and if correction is not possible, then adaptations in instruction must be made.)

Marshall and Copley (1967) conducted a questionnaire study to determine the problems perceived by ABE teachers. Fifteen active ABE teachers were queried. They were mainly concerned about how to go about fitting instruction to the needs of the adult student. More specifically, they focused upon (a) finding and devising a suitable curriculum, (b) procedures for fitting instruction to the background of individuals, (c) how to find time in the school day to work on curriculum development, and (d) approaches to the diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses and to the prescription of instruction. The investigators concluded that the teachers saw the several problem areas as being of equal importance and they suggested that the problems could effectively be dealt with in teacher reorientation workshops.

Although the sample size was very small, the problems identified are by no means small. Nor does it seem realistic to dismiss them as the kind of minor problems that can be handled satisfactorily in local, short-term workshops. The problems are, in fact, the very ones that continue to plague elementary school teachers, who not only have many more resources to draw from but also, as a rule, have more specific training for their job and more specific experience on the job. Indeed, what we need to know in ABE is what will help us to solve these very problems!

To Sum Up

What we know best at the present time is that we need to know a great deal more. The existing research base is neither broad nor deep. Nevertheless, we do know enough now to enable us to identify and tackle the most pressing problems regarding reading in ABE. Furthermore, we know a number of things about the adult as a learner and about reading as a sequence of skills that can enable us to bypass rediscovery of certain basics. Instead of rediscovering, we can concentrate on application and adaptation in teaching adults to read.

Problems and Steps Toward Solutions

We know that adults can be taught to read. We know, too, that in general we know more about how to teach reading effectively to children than to adults. I will be the first to concede that the task is in many ways tougher with adults than with children, but we ought to be able to profit from putting together some of the things we know about teaching reading to children and some of the things we know about adults. By doing this we can at least pin-point some problems and, perhaps, come up with some tentative solutions.

The characteristics of adult learners given in the schema that follows are from a list compiled by Aker (1968) in the context of an institute on adult basic education. The contrast of the adult as a learner with the child as a learner is, I think, appropriate because it can help us to spot specific problems of adults. The implications listed are those that are most apparent to me. Many of the implications call for the development of techniques and materials specifically for adults. Warmed over children's materials will not do the job.

ADULT CHARACTERISTICS	IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING READING TO ADULTS
Compared to children, adults:	Therefore, to make use of adults' strengths as well as make allowance for their weaknesses, we must:
have less acute senses of hearing and sight	develop auditory and visual screening tests for adults; establish minimum levels required to respond to regular instruction; develop adapted instructional programs for adults with visual and/or auditory defects that cannot be completely corrected
are slower to learn	establish guidelines for the realistic pacing of instruction
are less flexible	devise instructional programs that strike a balance between structure and self direction
are more self conscious; are more apprehensive and feel more anxiety	develop adequate assessment techniques to insure correct initial placement and subsequent success; develop acceptable techniques for providing positive feedback
feel a greater need for education; have a higher motivation to achieve specific goals; have needs which are immediate and concrete	determine interests and provide appropriate materials and learning experiences; establish optimum motivational techniques for adults, taking care not to push motivation to the point of anxiety; develop techniques for teaching study skills and providing for application in useful situations
have had a wider range of experience	develop check lists, etc. that will permit teachers to make optimum use of prior experiences; develop adult materials which capitalize on the experience base; establish guidelines to assist teachers in developing materials based on experiences.

Of course the analysis given only scratches the surface; it could and should be extended in terms of both adult characteristics and implications for reading instruction. As it is, it serves as a demonstration of how a consideration of the learner can help us to focus on what we do not know in order to do a more effective job of teaching adults to read. The suggestion is not, of course, that past and present workers have not begun to do just this kind of thing. That they have is clear in many curriculum guides and published instructional materials. My point is that much remains to be done, and it needs to be done in a systematic way so as to provide a sensible framework for the development of techniques and materials for teaching adults to read. Developing such a framework will be no mean task: It will require the collaborative efforts of adult educators with special competence in learning, instruction, and reading methodology. Most important, it will require the perceptive insights of effective ABE teachers.

Another way, or a complementary way, of approaching the task of establishing a framework for the development of techniques and materials for teaching adults to read could be through the reading task itself.

Essential Reading Skills

The techniques and materials developed to teach children to read are not generally appropriate for teaching adults to read. Adults come to ABE classes with different characteristics and expectations and they come with varying degrees of previous exposure to reading instruction. Perhaps it is because these things are true that some workers have jumped to the conclusion either that there is no particular need to pay much attention to the systematic, sequential development of reading skills in teaching adults to read, or that the skill development sequence is somehow substantially different for adults than for children. Reading specialists, however, generally agree that while the teaching approach must differ, the skills remain the same. Burnett (1966, p. 242) has said it very succinctly, "The learnings which underlie the ability to extract meaning from a printed page are common learnings whether the potential reader is a young child or a fully matured adult"; and others either explicitly or implicitly agree (Gray, 1956; Schiavone, 1962; Smith & Smith, 1962, p. 17; Summers, 1966).

There is no need, then, to rediscover a workable skill sequence for adults; we can adapt skill sequences that have been developed and found to be workable with elementary school children. Acceptance of an existing skill sequence would permit us to get on with the task of making the adaptations required for use with adults. This, in turn, would provide workers with the base required to (a) develop assessment instruments, (b) identify gaps in individuals' skill development, and (c) systematically organize materials and techniques.

What we need to know is how to identify individuals' strengths and weaknesses in reading skill development and, in turn, how to provide appropriate instruction for each individual. I am suggesting that a statement of essential skills in reading that is acceptable to ABE teachers can be the basis for providing what is needed.

Let me make a concrete suggestion. We have been working on a statement of essential reading skills that appears to be acceptable to experienced elementary school teachers and many reading specialists. Those skills and behavioral objectives are given in the Appendix to this paper. A more complete discussion is given by Otto and Smith (1970) and by Otto and Askov (in press). Skills and objectives are given for the areas of word attack, comprehension and study skills and they cover skills ordinarily introduced from kindergarten through sixth grade.

Starting with such a statement of skills and objectives, ABE workers could make the adaptations required for realistic use with adults. The revised statement, a consensual skill sequence statement, could then serve as the framework for the development and organization of evaluation instruments and instructional materials. Evaluation instruments keyed to the statement would help teachers to (a) establish a student's beginning level of skill development, (b) make subsequent checks on his skill development, and (c) focus upon specific instructional needs in terms of specific skills. Likewise, by keying instructional materials and techniques to the statement of skills, teachers would be better able to (a) match instruction to specific skill development needs, and (b) organize ideas and materials for retrieval and for sharing.

Whether efforts to provide a framework for organizing research and development efforts in the reading area of ABE proceed through the analysis of adult learner characteristics or the reading task or by an entirely different avenue, the development of a framework would be useful. It would permit workers to tackle problems in a systematic way and to pool the results of their efforts.

What We Don't Know

As I consider the existing literature, I am struck by the fact that certain themes or clusters of specific concern seem to emerge. I shall list some of the clusters of concern as I see them. By identifying major areas of concern perhaps we can focus more clearly on what we don't know and, in turn, on what we need to know. My personal biases will, of course, be obvious.

1. One of the recommendations of the Greenleigh and Associates (1966) report was that new achievement and intelligence tests that are applicable to educationally and economically deprived adults be developed. The recommendation has been made elsewhere and it continues to be made. The *ABE Student Survey* (by Rasof and Neff, published by Follett) and the *ABLE-Adult Basic Learning Examination* (by Karlsen *et al*, published by Harcourt, Brace and World) are steps in the right direction, but more needs to be done. We need: survey tests to help determine initial placement in ABE classes and to measure group progress; diagnostic tests to assess individual skill development; and informal inventories to determine independent and instructional reading levels. The establishment of a skill sequence framework as suggested would, of course, expedite efforts to develop such tests and to truly individualize instruction in reading.

2. High interest, ~~how~~ low reading level supplementary reading materials are needed. These need not be "instructional" materials in the usual sense; instead they should be the kinds of material that encourage the newly literate adult to use his reading skill. As Robinson (1963) has pointed out, beginning literacy skills often disintegrate because of lack of use and practice. To do an effective job of providing the materials needed, we need to know: more about the interests of adults in general and about individual adults in ABE classes in particular; what formats adults find most appealing; more about how best to assess the readability levels of the materials; how to make the materials available to newly literate adults. The role of libraries in meeting reading needs of the

newly literate is being explored (Lyman, 1968); the potential role of other agencies should also be examined.

In addition, guidelines to help ABE teachers develop effective materials are needed. We know that the illiterate adult is oriented to seek immediate goals. My feeling is that we should worry less about producing more commercial instructional materials and more about (a) how to help teachers devise their own materials, and (b) how to see to it that appropriate materials get into the hands of the newly literate.

3. ABE teachers are concerned about fitting instruction to the background and to the specific strengths and weaknesses of their students. Progress in the two areas just identified will provide direct inputs: more adequate diagnostic information and a better understanding of materials will be most useful. We need to know: what kinds of pre-service and/or inservice training are most useful in helping teachers to prescribe instruction, what classroom management schemes are most useful, what forms of test data are most useful to teachers.

4. There appears to be some evidence that the experience and training of ABE teachers is of no consequence in producing gains in literacy levels. Greenleigh and Associates (1966) recommended that high school graduates should be recruited as literacy instructors; but they also pointed out that, in their study, the majority of the high school level instructors, unlike the college graduate and experienced instructors, and the majority of participants were Negroes. We need to know whether the high school graduates succeeded simply because they have soul or for other reasons. If the latter, then we need to know what. We need to know if experienced teachers will get better results than inexperienced teachers

when they are not restricted to a fixed instructional system. More important, we need to know if experienced teachers left to their own devices can produce better results than fixed instructional systems. We need to know a great deal more about desirable attributes and the optimum role of the literacy instructor. We need to know more about optimum pupil:teacher ratios; fifteen to one is often suggested, but it seems that a more flexible determination would be desirable.

5. We apparently need to know more about the clientele in literacy classes. I hesitate to make the suggestion, because if we really mean to look diagnostically at individuals, then the general characteristics of the group are of little consequence. Nevertheless, a better overall conception of the characteristics of the general clientele might help us to break down some of the preconceptions that appear to exist. Epidemiological studies--where all of the adults reading below a certain level in, say, a reasonably large metropolitan area are examined and described--would be worthwhile.

6. There are various estimates in the literature of how much time is required to bring illiterates up to a given level of reading ability. We do not need more studies to establish such time allotments. The inevitable conclusion must be that some training is better than none and that more is better than some. Rigid time allotments dictate a lock-step approach to literacy instruction. We do need to know more about pacing in literacy instruction, but first we need guidelines for working with individuals.

7. There is a continuing concern about finding the Best method of teaching reading in some circles. I do not think, however, that we need

to pursue that will-o-the-wisp much further at this time. If we ever manage to standardize people we will be able to standardize approaches to teaching them. Until then--and I hope it will be never--we need to know more about individual learners, about the interaction of teacher and learner, about the interaction of teacher and learner and materials. With such knowledge we shall be able to personalize instruction, not instructionalize the person.

Brown and Newman (1970) used a quote from Oettinger (1968) to make a similar point:

> However wasteful in appearance, it fits my prejudices best to encourage as much diversity as possible--as many different paths, as many different outlooks, as many different experiments, as many different initiatives as we can afford once the demands of education have been balanced against those of other needs of our society. We should plan for the encouragement of pluralism and diversity, at least in technique.

As I suggested at the beginning, what we don't know probably outweighs what we do know about teaching adults to read. Nevertheless, I suggested, too, that what we suspect has permitted us to get on with the job of teaching reading. That this is so is cause neither for rejoicing nor for weeping. If we feel we are doing reasonably well, we know we could be doing better. If we know that we are having some success with what we know now, we know too that we will have more success when we do know what we don't know now.

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I. Word Attack

LEVEL A

1. Listens for rhyming elements

    a. Words

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to tell when (a) two words pronounced by the teacher (man-pan, call-bell, when-pen) and/or (b) the names of two objects, do and do not rhyme (i.e., "sound alike").

    b. Phrases and verses

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pick out the rhyming words in traditional verses (i.e., "Little Jack Horner Sat in a Corner") and nonsense verses ("Wing, wong, way - Tisha, loona say") read by the teacher.

2. The child is able to supply the missing word in a rhyming verse read by the teacher (e.g., "The big tall man—Fried eggs in a ___________________.")

2. Notices likenesses and differences

    a. Pictures (shapes)

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to match key shapes with shapes that are identical in terms of form and orientation. e.g., □ + ⏢).

b. Letters and numbers

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to pick the letter—upper or lower case—or number in a series that is identical to a key number or letter. [The child points to the letter that is the same as the first letter or number in a row: P: B T P K; s: s z e c; 9: 6 0 9 8].

c. Words and phrases

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to pick the word or phrase in a series that is identical to a key word or phrase: e.g.,
down: wand - down - bone - find;
back and forth: bank and find - back and forth - found it)

3. Distinguishes colors

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify colors—i.e., blue, green, black, yellow, red, orange, white, brown, purple—named by the teacher. [The child picks from four choices the color named by the teacher, e.g., key word = blue, color choices = blue and black; the child chooses the proper crayon to fill in boxes with the colors named by the teacher].

4. Listens for initial consonant sounds

OBJECTIVE

Given two common words pronounced by the teacher (e.g., bird-ball, boy-take, banana-dog), the child is able to tell when the words do and do not begin alike.

LEVEL B

1. Has a sight word vocabulary of 50-100 words

OBJECTIVE

Given a maximum 1-second exposure per word in context, the child is able to recognize 92 Preprimer and Primer level words selected from the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary List of 220 words.

NOTE: The specific Preprimer and Primer words are given in the list on the next page. The child should be able to recognize additional sight words that occur in instructional materials to which he has been exposed.

2. Follows left-to-right sequence

OBJECTIVE

The child reacts to number, letter or word stimuli in a left-to-right sequence. [The child names the letters or numbers presented in rows—

N C H P

c o e g

4 7 1 2—

in a left-to-right sequence].

3. Has phonic analysis skills
   a. Consonant sounds
      1. Beginning

OBJECTIVES

1. Given two common words pronounced by the teacher (e.g., man-pet, ball-boy), the child is able to tell when the words begin alike. (review)

BREAKDOWN OF THE DOLCH BASIC WORD LIST BY LEVELS

Level B:
Preprimer

1. a
2. and
3. away
4. big
5. blue
6. can
7. come
8. down
9. find
10. for
11. funny
12. go
13. help
14. here
15. I
16. in
17. is
18. it
19. jump
20. little
21. look
22. make
23. me
24. my
25. not
26. one
27. play
28. red
29. run
30. said
31. see
32. the
33. three
34. to
35. two
36. up
37. we
38. where
39. yellow
40. you

Level B:
Primer

1. all
2. am
3. are
4. at
5. ate
6. be
7. black
8. brown
9. but
10. came
11. did
12. do
13. eat
14. four
15. get
16. good
17. have
18. he
19. into
20. like
21. must
22. new
23. no
24. now
25. on
26. our
27. out
28. please
29. pretty
30. ran
31. ride
32. saw
33. say
34. she
35. so
36. soon
37. that
38. there
39. they
40. this
41. too
42. under
43. want

Level C:
First Grade

1. after
2. again
3. an
4. any
5. as
6. ask
7. by
8. could
9. every
10. fly
11. from
12. give
13. going
14. had
15. has
16. her
17. him
18. his
19. how
20. just
21. know
22. let
23. live
24. may
25. of
26. old
27. once
28. open
29. over
30. put
31. round
32. some
33. stop
34. take
35. thank
36. them
37. then
38. think
39. walk
40. were
41. when

Level D:
Second Grade

1. always
2. around
3. because
4. been
5. before
6. best
7. both
8. buy
9. call
10. cold
11. does
12. don't
13. fast
14. first
15. five
16. found
17. gave
18. goes
19. green
20. its
21. made
22. many
23. off
24. or
25. pull
26. read
27. right
28. sing
29. sit
30. sleep
31. tell
32. their
33. these
34. those
35. upon
36. us
37. use
38. very
39. wash
40. which
41. why
42. wish
43. work

Level D:
Third Grade

1. about
2. better
3. bring
4. carry
5. clean
6. cut
7. done
8. draw
9. drink
10. eight
11. fall
12. far
13, full
14. got
15. grow
16. hold
17. hot
18. hurt
19. if
20. keep
21. kind
22. laugh
23. light
24. long
25. much
26. myself
27. never
28. only
29. own
30. pick
31. seven
32. shall
33. show
34. six
35. shall
36. start
37. ten
38. today
39. together
40. try
41. warm

BREAKDOWN OF THE DOLCH BASIC WORD LIST BY LEVELS (cont.)

Level B: Preprimer	Level B: Primer	Level C: First Grade	Level D: Second Grade	Level D: Third Grade
	44. was		44. would	
	45. well		45. write	
	46. went		46. your	
	47. what			
	48. white			
	49. who			
	50. will			
	51. with			
	52. yes			

2. Given a real or nonsense word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give the letter that makes the initial sound.

3. Given a word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give another word that begins with the same sound.

2. Ending

OBJECTIVES

1. Given two common words pronounced by the teacher (e.g., bat-hut, six-sit), the child is able to tell when the words do and do not end alike.

2. Given a word pronounced by the teacher (e.g., bat, car), the child is able to give the letter that makes the ending sound.

b. Consonant blends

OBJECTIVES

1. When directed to listen for the first two sounds—i.e., pl, gr, pr, cr, fl, cl, bl—in a real or nonsense word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to (a) identify words that begin with the same two sounds and (b) identify the two letters that make the initial sounds. [(a) From a series of three pictured objects the child

selects the one(s) with names that begin with the same two sounds as the word enunciated by the teacher: drink (pronounced) . . . drum, table, dress (pictures). (b) From a series of four two-letter combinations, the child selects the pair that makes the initial sounds of the word enunciated by the teacher.]

2. The child is able to pronounce real and nonsense words that begin with the following blends: pl, gr, pr, cr, fl, cl, bl, gl. [Some examples of appropriate nonsense words: plag, gref, prid, flin.]

c. Rhyming elements

OBJECTIVES

1. Given a word (e.g., pan, ball, sat), the child is able to select a rhyming word based on structure.

2. Given a known word, the child is able to produce a rhyming word.

d. Short vowels

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to give the sound and letter name of the vowel in single syllable words with a single short vowel sound (e.g., man, duck, doll, hop).

e. Simple consonant digraphs

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify simple two-consonant combinations—ch, th, sh—that result in a single new sound. [The child is asked to identify the digraphs (i.e., two consonants with a single sound) in words enunciated by the teacher: she, chaff, teeth, fish, beach.]

4. Has structural analysis skills

a. Compound words

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify compound words and to specify the elements of a compound word. [The child identifies the compound word in a sentence and specifies the component words: The football went over the fence.]

b. Contractions

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify simple contractions (e.g., I'm, it's, can't) and use them correctly in sentences.

c. Base words and endings

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify the root word in known inflected words (e.g., jumping, catches, runs).

d. Plurals

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to tell when known words—noun plus s forms—are singular or plural (i.e., indicate one or more than one).

e. Possessive forms

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify the possessive forms of nouns in context. [The child indicates the under-scored words that are possessive forms.]

LEVEL C

1. Has a sight word vocabulary of 100-170 words

OBJECTIVE

Given a maximum 1-second exposure per word in context, the child is able to recognize 133 Preprimer, Primer, and First Grade words selected from the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary List of 220 words. NOTE: See the list given after Objective B.1 for the specific words. The child should be able to recognize additional sight words that occur in instructional materials to which he has been exposed.

2. Has phonic analysis skills

   a. Consonants and their variant sounds

OBJECTIVE

The child recognizes the variant sounds of s, c, and g in words like: sit, trees, sure, picnic, circus, giant, good, drag, cage, cake, city. [The child matches words that have similar sounds of s, c, and g.]
NOTE: The following consonants have more than one sound—c, g, s, q, d, x, t, z—but variant sounds of s, c, and g are most common at this level.

   b. Consonant blends

OBJECTIVE

1. When directed to listen for the first two sounds—i.e., st, sk, sm, sp, sw, sn—in a word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to (a) identify words that begin with the same two sounds, and (b) identify the two letters that make the initial sounds.

2. The child is able to pronounce nonsense words that contain the following blends: st, sk, sm, sp, sw, sn.

c. Vowel sounds

1. Long vowel sounds

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce real words and nonsense words with a single long vowel sound and to identify the vowel heard (e.g., nose, brile, cheese, seat, labe).

2. The child is able to designate the letter that makes the single vowel sound in a word and indicate whether the sound is long or short.

2. Vowel plus r

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce words with r—controlled vowels.

2. The child is able to name the vowel that is with r in nonsense words pronounced by the teacher (e.g., darl, mur, der, forn, girt).
NOTE: Because er, ir, and ur have the same sound, e, i, or u is the appropriate response in er, ir, and ur words.

3. a plus l

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce words in which there is an al combination (e.g., ball, halt).

2. The child is able to name the vowel and the subsequent letter in al nonsense words pronounced by the teacher.

4. a plus w

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce words in which there is an aw combination (e.g., draw, lawn, saw).

2. The child is able to name the vowel and the subsequent letter in aw nonsense words pronounced by the teacher.

5. Diphthongs oi, oy, ou, ow, ew

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce words in which there is an oi, oy, ou, ow, ew combination (e.g., house, boy, soil, cow, new).

2. The child is able to identify the two vowels in oi, oy, ou, ow, ew nonsense words pronounced by the teacher. [Given an explanation that two vowels sometimes have a single sound, the child (a) indicates when words pronounced by the teacher have such a vowel team, and (b) names the vowels in the team.]

6. Long and short oo

OBJECTIVES

1. The child is able to pronounce words in which there is an oo combination (e.g., look, book, choose).

2. The child is able to indicate when the oo in key words has the long oo (choose) or the short oo (book) sound.

d. Vowel generalizations

1. Short vowel generalization

OBJECTIVE

Given a real or nonsense word in which there is a single vowel and a final consonant, the child gives the vowel its short sound (e.g., egg, bag, is, at, gum) except with exceptions known as sight words (e.g., cold, bold, sight, fight).

2. Silent e generalization

OBJECTIVE

Given a real or nonsense word that has two vowels, one of which is a final e separated from the first vowel by a consonant, the child first attempts pronunciation by making the initial vowel long and the final vowel silent (e.g., cake, tube, mape, jome) except with exceptions known as sight words (e.g., come, have, prove).

3. Two vowels together

OBJECTIVE

Given a real or nonsense word that has two consecutive vowels, the child first attempts pronunciation by making the first vowel long and the second vowel silent (e.g., boat, meet, bait, each) except when the two vowels are known dipthongs (i.e., oi, oy, ou, ow, ew) or when the word is a known exception (e.g., bread, true, August).

4. Final vowel

OBJECTIVE

Given a real or nonsense word in which the only vowel is at the end, the child gives the vowel its long sound (e.g., go, she, me, he).

NOTE: Application of the vowel rules is best assessed individually and informally.

e. Common consonant digraphs

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to name the letters in the common two-consonant combinations—ch, th, sh, wh, nk, ng, nk—that result in a single new sound. [The child is asked to identify the digraphs (i.e., two consonants with a single sound) in real and nonsense words enunciated by the teacher: sink, frink, wharl, gling, chorf, thunk.]

3. Has structural analysis skills

a. Base words with prefixes and suffixes

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of how base (root) words are modified by prefixes and suffixes by adding or selecting appropriate affixes to root words in context. [Given a root word, he adds or selects affixes to complete a sentence: An umbrella is (use) on a rainy day.]

b. More difficult plural forms

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to select singular and plural forms of words (e.g., mice, lady, children, dresses, circus).

4. Distinguishes among homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms

a. Homonyms

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to choose between homonyms, given a sentence context, e.g., Mother bought some _________ for dinner (meet, meat).

b. Synonyms and antonyms

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to tell when the words in a pair have the same, opposite or simply different meanings.

5. Has independent and varied word attack skills

OBJECTIVE

In both self-directed and teacher-directed reading the child uses a variety of skills (i.e., picture clues, context clues, structural analysis, sound/symbol analysis, comparison of new to known words) in attacking unknown words. [In the oral reading of an expository passage at his instructional level of difficulty, the child uses a variety of skills to attack unknown words.]

NOTE: The objective can be assessed through the administration of an informal reading inventory.

6. Chooses appropriate meaning of multiple meaning words

OBJECTIVE

Given a multiple meaning word in varied contexts, the child is able to choose the meaning appropriate to the context. [The child chooses the appropriate given definition of spring for each of the following contexts: The lion was about to spring. We had a drink at the spring. The violets bloom in the spring.]

LEVEL D

1. Has a sight word vocabulary of 170-240 words

OBJECTIVE

Given a maximum 1-second exposure per word in context, the child is able to recognize all of the words on the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary List of 220 words.

NOTE: See the list given after objective B.1 for the specific words. The child should be able to recognize additional sight words that occur in instructional materials to which he has been exposed.

2. Has phonic analysis skills

    a. Three-letter consonant blends

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify the common—scr, shr, spl, spr, str, thr—three letter consonant blends in real and nonsense words pronounced by the teacher. [The child names the three letters in appropriate words pronounced by the teacher.]

b. Simple principles of silent letters

OBJECTIVES

1. The child demonstrates his knowledge of silent letters by correctly pronouncing words like the following: knife, gnat, write, dumb, doubt, high, flight, eat, read, four, believed.

NOTE: Silent consonants commonly occur in the following combinations: (k)n, (g)n, (w)r, m(b), (b)t, i(gh), (t)ch.

2. The child is able to pick out the silent letters in words.

3. Has structural analysis skills

a. Syllabication

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his ability to apply syllabication generalizations by dividing given words into single-vowel-sound units. [The child indicates the number of parts (syllables) in a word; the child draws lines between the parts (syllables) of a word.]

NOTE: The focus should be upon pronunciation units, not formal syllabication.

b. Accent

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to indicate the accented part (syllable) in known words, primarily two syllable ones.

c. The schwa

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to specify the syllables in known words that contain a schwa.

NOTE: The ability to identify schwa sounds has little inherent value. However, the child who is aware of the existence of the schwa sound and its applications may be more successful in sounding vowels than the child who is not. Note that although the short sound of u in, say, puppy has the sound of a schwa, it is not a schwa because it is in the accented syllable.

d. Possessive forms

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to identify nouns and pronouns, in context, that denote ownership. [The child indicates the underscored words in connected text that are possessive forms: The boys went to the show with their mother.]

LEVEL E

NOTE: Many of the skills listed at Levels A, B, C, and D need to be developed to higher levels of sophistication at Level E. The objectives for the lower level skills do not change at Level E; but the specifics of the evaluation change do reflect higher level applications.

II. Comprehension

LEVEL A

1. Develops listening skills

   a. Has attention and concentration span suitable for his age

      OBJECTIVE

      The child is able to demonstrate active participation in classroom listening situations. [The child attends to an oral presentation and responds appropriately, i.e., follows directions, reacts with relevant questions, and/or contributions.]

      NOTE: Assessment is best carried out over a span of time during which the child can be observed in a variety of situations and his behavior compared to that of his age/grade group.

   b. Is able to remember details

      OBJECTIVE

      The child is able to remember sufficient details from an oral presentation—i.e., story, show-and-tell—to respond to specific questions, e.g., four questions regarding specific facts based upon a 100-word presentation.

2. Increases vocabulary through listening

   OBJECTIVE

   The child begins to use new words learned in school in his own spoken language.

   NOTE: The kindergarten child is almost certain to be exposed to a number of new school-related words, e.g., lavatory, chalkboard, custodian, recess, principal. Such words can become the focus for informal assessment of the objective.

3. Can relate details to each other to construct a story

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to relate details to each other to construct a story. [The child arranges scrambled pictures to construct a story.]

4. Anticipates outcome of stories

OBJECTIVES

1. Given a picture of an event, the child is able to select an appropriate outcome from two pictured choices.

2. Given the facts essential for the beginning of a story line, the child is able to project relevant outcomes. [The teacher reads a story beginning:

> It was a rainy day. Puff, the kitten, had been outside playing in the mud. She was tired when she came in and wanted a soft, warm place to sleep. She was wet and her paws were muddy. Puff walked across the kitchen floor that mother had just washed.

The child gives relevant responses to questions like, "Where do you think Puff went?" and "How do you think Mother felt about this?"]

5. Interprets pictures critically

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to point out incongruities in pictures and to pick out pictures with incongruous details (e.g., a dog driving a car, a five-legged elephant).

6. Can identify main characters in a story

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to name and describe up to four main characters in a story told by the teacher.

NOTE: This objective can best be assessed informally.

LEVEL B

1. Uses picture and context clues

   a. Picture clues

      OBJECTIVE

      The child is able to use picture clues in drawing conclusions and answering questions. [The child responds to questions based on information presented in a picture.]

   b. Context clues

      OBJECTIVE

      The child is able to use context clues in drawing conclusions and answering questions. [The child responds to riddles in which familiar animals, etc. are described.]

2. Is able to gain meaning from

   a. Words

      OBJECTIVE

      The child demonstrates his understanding of individual words in connected text by responding correctly to specific questions with a single word focus, e.g., questions concerned essentially with word meaning (vocabulary).

   b. Sentences

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of specific sentences by responding correctly to specific questions regarding the literal content of single sentences.

c. Whole selections

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of a coherent passage of connected text by responding correctly to questions regarding literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding implied meaning, i.e., inferential questions.

NOTE: The materials used in assessing the three preceding objectives may be written at a level of difficulty appropriate for the child's (a) grade placement, (b) instructional level, or (c) independent level.

3. Uses punctuation as a guide to meaning

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his attention to punctuation at the ends of sentences and punctuation of dialogue through his oral reading of familiar sentences.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed informally.

LEVEL C

1. Is able to gain meaning from

a. Words

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of individual words in connected text by responding correctly to specific questions with a single word focus, e.g., questions concerned essentially with word meaning (vocabulary).

b. Sentences

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of specific sentences by responding correctly to specific questions regarding the literal content of single sentences.

c. Paragraphs

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of paragraphs by responding correctly to questions regarding the literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding the implied meaning of whole paragraphs.

d. Whole selections

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of a coherent passage of connected text by responding correctly to questions regarding literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding implied meaning, i.e., inferential questions.

NOTE: The materials used in assessing the four preceding objectives may be written at a level of difficulty appropriate for the child's (a) grade placement, (b) instructional level, or (c) independent level.

2. Reads in meaningful phrases

OBJECTIVE

In any oral reading situation, the child reads familiar material with phrasing appropriate to logical units of thought.

LEVEL D

1. Is able to gain meaning from

a. Words

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of individual words in connected text by responding correctly to specific questions with a single word focus, e.g., questions concerned essentially with word meaning (vocabulary).

b. Sentences

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of specific sentences by responding correctly to specific questions regarding the literal content of sentences.

c. Paragraphs

1. Main idea stated

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of paragraphs by responding correctly to questions regarding the literal and appropriately to questions regarding the implied meaning of whole paragraphs.

2. Main idea implied but not stated

OBJECTIVE

Given a paragraph in which a main idea is implied but not stated, the child is able to synthesize and state an appropriate, literal main idea.

d. Whole selections

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of a coherent passage of connected text by responding correctly to questions regarding literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding implied meaning, i.e., inferential questions.

NOTE: The materials used in assessing the five preceding objectives are written at a level of difficulty appropriate for the child's (a) grade placement, (b) instructional level, or (c) independent level.

2. Reads for sequence of events

OBJECTIVES

1. Having read a narrative account, the child is able to recall the sequence of events in the narrative. [Having read a narrative selection of, say, 300 words, the child correctly places five selected events by occurrence in time.]

2. Given scrambled presentation of six events with an implicit narrative order, the child is able to place the events in an appropriate time sequence.

3. Gains additional skill in use of punctuation as a guide to meaning

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his attention to punctuation—i.e., semicolon, colon, dash, varied uses of the comma—through his oral reading of familiar passages.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed informally.

LEVEL E

1. Adjusts reading rate to
    a. Type of material
        1. Factual and fiction

OBJECTIVE

Given materials written at similar difficulty levels, the child reads fiction materials at a more rapid rate (i.e., greater number of words per minute) than factual or content area material.

b. Level of difficulty

OBJECTIVE

The child adjusts his reading rate appropriately as reading materials become more or less difficult. [The child reads a given type of material—e.g., science material—written at his independent reading level of difficulty at a more rapid rate—i.e., greater number of words per minute—than similar material written at his instructional level of reading difficulty.]

c. Purpose for reading

1. Reading to verify or locate specific information
2. Reading for a general overview
3. Reading to master specific facts
4. Reading for enjoyment

OBJECTIVE

The child skims materials at a rapid rate when seeking to verify or locate specific information—i.e., a date, a name; he reads material at a lower but rapid rate when seeking an overview or general idea regarding content; he scans material at a relatively slow rate when his purpose is to master and recall factual information; and when he reads for enjoyment he varies his rate according to his mood and interest.

d. Familiarity with the subject

OBJECTIVE

The child reads material covering subject matter with which he has general familiarity at more rapid rates than material with which he has less familiarity. [Given pretests on the general content of given passages written at a standard difficulty level, the child reads the passages on which he scored high more rapidly than the passages on which he scored low.]

NOTE: The four preceding objectives are all highly interrelated: Type of material, difficulty of material, purpose for reading, and familiarity with the subject should all be critical determiners of a child's reading rate and all are interrelated. Separate objectives are stated to permit the teacher to focus upon specifics in informal or semi-formal reading situations. Formal assessment exercises are not likely to yield definitive information regarding the behavior described.

2. Uses punctuation and phrasing

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his attention to punctuation and phrasing through his interpretive oral reading of familiar passages.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed informally.

3. Reads for sequence of events

OBJECTIVE

Having read a narrative account, the child is able to (a) recall the sequence of the specific events covered, and if appropriate (b) place the general incident(s) covered in relation to time of occurrence of other known incidents. [Having read an account of, say, the invasion of Iwo Jima, the child is able to (a) recall the sequence of significant events in the invasion, and (b) place the invasion of Iwo Jima in relation to time of occurrence of other major battles of World War II.]

4. Is able to gain meaning from

   a. Words

      OBJECTIVE

      The child demonstrates his understanding of individual words in connected text by responding correctly to specific questions with a single word focus, e.g., questions concerned essentially with word meaning (vocabulary).

   b. Sentences

      OBJECTIVE

      The child demonstrates his understanding of specific sentences by responding correctly to specific questions regarding the literal content of sentences.

   c. Paragraphs

      1. Main idea stated

         OBJECTIVE

         The child demonstrates his understanding of paragraphs by responding correctly to questions regarding the literal and appropriately to questions regarding the implied meaning of whole paragraphs.

      2. Main idea implicit but not stated

         OBJECTIVE

         Given a paragraph in which a main idea is implied but not stated, the child is able to synthesize and state an appropriate, literal main idea.

d. Whole selections

OBJECTIVE

The child demonstrates his understanding of a coherent passage of connected text by responding correctly to questions regarding literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding implied meaning, i.e., inferential questions.

NOTE: The materials used in assessing the five preceding objectives are written at a level of difficulty appropriate for the child's (a) grade placement, (b) instructional level, or (c) independent level.

III. Study Skills

LEVEL A

1. Follows simple directions

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to perform the actions in simple one- and two-stage directions, e.g., "Make an X in the middle of your paper," "Draw a ball on your paper and put a dot next to it."

2. Demonstrates elementary work habits

   a. Shows independence in work

OBJECTIVE

The child shows independence in his assigned work by (a) asking questions that are necessary for clarification of the task, (b) not asking attention seeking questions once the task is clear, and (c) keeping the necessary tools--i.e., pencil, paper, crayons, scissors, etc.--at hand.

   b. Accepts responsibility for completion and quality of work

OBJECTIVE

The child shows acceptance of responsibility for completion and quality of work by (a) making a reasonable effort to do neat work, and (b) pacing himself to complete a task acceptably in the allotted time.

NOTE: The two preceding objectives must be assessed by observing the child over a period of time. Special note should be made of the child who does neat work but only at the expense of extended, painstaking effort.

3. Shows development of motor coordination (eye and hand)

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to make a legible copy of given manuscript writings e.g.,

The quick brown fox

LEVEL B

1. Follows directions

   a. Follows oral directions given to a group

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to follow two-stage oral directions when the directions are administered to a group--i.e., 10 or more pupils--of which the child is a part.

   b. Follows oral directions given individually

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to perform the actions in two-stage directions that require some judgment when the directions are given directly to him.

NOTE: The two preceding objectives can best be assessed by observing the child's performance over a period of time, for contrived situations are likely not only to have an aura of contrivance but also to be of too short duration to be very meaningful. Special note should be made of the child who responds adequately with individual attention but not in a group, or, conversely, who can take cues from the group and proceed satisfactorily but breaks down when left to himself.

c. Follows written directions

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to follow a series of three to five written directions.

2. Has adequate work habits

OBJECTIVE

The child shows independence and acceptance of responsibility by (a) asking only the questions that are necessary for clarification of a task, (b) keeping the materials required to complete a task available and organized, (c) showing an awareness of the standards of neatness and general quality in assigned work, and (d) pacing himself to complete assigned tasks in the time allotted.

3. Recognizes organization of ideas in sequential order

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to recognize sequential relationships among two or three ideas.

4. Begins to make judgments and draws conclusions

OBJECTIVE

Given facts, the child is able to respond correctly to questions requiring that he make judgments and draw conclusions on the basis of the facts presented.

5. Uses table of contents

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to respond to appropriate questions with information gained from the tables of contents of First-Grade books.

LEVEL C

1. Uses picture dictionaries to find new words

OBJECTIVE

The child is sufficiently familiar with a picture dictionary to locate newly introduced words.

NOTE: The objective is best assessed through informal observation.

2. Groups words by initial letters

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to put words that begin with different letters into alphabetical order.

3. Knows how to use and explores the library as a research center

OBJECTIVE

The child actively seeks out library--or learning center--resources that are appropriate for completing an assigned task.

NOTE: The objective must be assessed by observing the child's response to a number of assignments over a period of time.

4. Shows increasing independence in work

   a. Reads and follows directions by himself

OBJECTIVE

Given a series of four to eight written directions, the child is able to read and follow the directions with no guidance from the teacher.

   b. Knows how to and does use a table of contents.

OBJECTIVE

The child, without teacher direction, turns to tables of contents to (a) gain general familiarity with new books, (b) look for information, (c) find specifically assigned sections or chapters.

5. Begins to read maps

OBJECTIVE

Given a simple picture map, the child is able to answer questions regarding directions, relative distances, and basic map symbols.

LEVEL D

1. Begins to use index of books

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to respond to appropriate questions with information gained from the indices like those used in Third-Grade books.

2. Reads simple maps and graphs

   a. Maps

OBJECTIVE

Given an appropriate map, the child is able to respond to questions regarding distances and directions by making use of appropriate keys.

   b. Graphs

      1) Picture graphs

OBJECTIVE

Given a graph in which pictorial representations stand for multiple units, the child is able to respond to appropriate questions.

2) Bar graphs

OBJECTIVE

Given a graph in which quantity is represented by length-of-line, the child is able to respond to appropriate questions.

3. Realizes printed statements may be either fact or opinion

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to indicate whether given statements represent fact or opinion.

4. Has beginning outlining skills

OBJECTIVE

Given the major points in a formal outline, the child is able to select and fill in second-order points from well organized paragraphs written at his instructional level of difficulty, e.g.,

I. Birds are alike in many ways
    A.
    B.
    C.
    D.
II. A bird's feathers are useful
    A.
    B.
    C.

5. Follows directions

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to (a) remember and follow a series of directions in sequence, (b) generalize from directions for one task to a similar task, and (c) follow written directions in independent work.

6. Has adequate work habits

OBJECTIVE

The child shows independence and acceptance of responsibility by (a) working independently on assigned projects, (b) making constructive use of free time, (c) adhering to standards of neatness and quality in all work, and (d) pacing himself to complete assigned tasks in the time allotted.

LEVEL E

1. Increases and broadens dictionary skills

a. Alphabetizes words

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to alphabetize words, even when two or more of the initial letters are identical.

b. Uses guide words as an aid in finding words

OBJECTIVE

Given the guide words and page numbers from three to six dictionary pages, the child is able to specify the page on which specific words could be found.

c. Uses diacritical markings for pronunciation aids

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to pronounce unfamiliar words--i.e., Charybdis, escutcheon, imbroglio, spiegeleisen--by making use of diacritical markings.

2. Utilizes encyclopedia

Uses guide letters to find information on a given subject, uses alphabetical arrangements to locate information, and uses topical headings to locate information

OBJECTIVE

Given a specific research topic to be looked up in an encyclopedia, the child is able to (a) identify an appropriate topical heading, (b) select the appropriate volume, and (c) find the topic.

NOTE: The objective is best assessed through observation.

3. Uses indices efficiently

OBJECTIVE

Having identified a general topic the child uses the indices of books or the index volume of an encyclopedia to locate specific information regarding sub-topics, e.g., SPACE, Space travel: development of flight plan, history of.

4. Uses maps, tables, and graphs

   a. Answers questions requiring the interpretation of political maps

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to use the information given in maps and their keys to answer questions regarding locations, distances, and directions.

   b. Selects appropriate maps to determine direction, distance, land formation, climate, temperature, rainfall, time zones, population, and travel routes.

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to select appropriate maps to gain information regarding direction, distance, land formation, climate, temperature, rainfall, time zones, population, and travel routes.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed in naturalistic situations over an extended period of time.

c. Answers questions requiring the interpretation of graphs

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to interpret information given in graphs to answer questions regarding comparisons of quantities. He can determine proportions and amounts from circle graphs. He can locate the point where two variables meet on picture graphs, bar graphs, and line graphs (noncumulative, cumulative, and multipleline cumulative) and gain relative and actual performance information from it.

d. Answers questions requiring the interpretation of tables

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to interpret information given in tables by: (1) knowing what information can and cannot be determined from the table, (2) using two dimensions to determine a specific cell, (3) comparing one cell to all the other cells, and (4) comparing two specific cells using pairs of two dimensions.

5. Knows how to use library or materials center effectively

a. Begins to use card catalog to find information: uses author, title, and subject cards; makes use of the Dewey Decimal System of Classification to locate books on the shelf; finds fiction books as alphabetized by author's name; and makes use of cross reference cards.

OBJECTIVE

Given a general research topic, the child is able to utilize the card catalog in locating appropriate materials.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed in a naturalistic situation: Given an assigned general topic, the child should (1) break it down into relevant topics to check in the card catalog, (2) check alternate (See . . .) and cross (See also . . .) references when appropriate (3) note the classification of relevant material, and (4) use the classification in locating materials on the shelf.

b. Uses other reference materials such as atlases, almanacs, pamphlet file, picture file, etc., magazines and subject index to children's magazines, and newspapers

OBJECTIVE

Given a need for specific information, the child makes use of appropriate references.

NOTE: This objective is best assessed in naturalistic situations over an extended period of time. The assessment must be made in view of materials available.

c. Locates and uses audio-visual materials

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to locate and utilize available tape recorders, film strips, tachistoscopic and controlled presentation devices--e.g., Controlled Reader, Tach-X, Shadowscope--when appropriate.

NOTE: Observations must be the basis for assessment of this skill: The child should know (a) when and where to use audio-visual materials, (b) the software that is appropriate for use with the hardware, and (c) the accepted procedures for operating the equipment he chooses.

d. Knows procedure for checking books and materials in and out

OBJECTIVE

The child knows and follows the established procedure for checking books and materials in and out of the library or materials center.

6. Recognizes and uses the various parts of texts and supplementary books and materials

OBJECTIVE

The child can locate and use when appropriate (a) tables of contents, (b) lists of figures, (c) glossaries, (d) indices and (e) bibliographies and lists of sources.

7. Organizes information

a. Gains skill in note taking by beginning to take brief notes in own words, learning to take notes selectively by picking out main idea and supporting details, arranging ideas in sequence, and identifying source of materials by use of bibliography and footnotes.

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to take notes from varied sources in a form that is useful to him, i.e., permits him to retrieve information as needed.

b. Uses outlining skills

1) Knows correct outline form; selects main points, and selects and orders details

OBJECTIVE

Given selections--i.e., three or more paragraphs--written at his instructional level of difficulty, the child is able to select and order main points and details up to third order--i.e., I.A.1--in Fourth Grade and up to fourth and fifth order in Sixth Grade--i.e., I.A. 1.a. 1).

2) Outlines materials when appropriate

OBJECTIVE

The child uses his outlining skills to organize the concepts and details he derives from reading materials.

NOTE: Assessment of the objective must be done informally over an extended period of time: The child should use his outlining skill spontaneously when his purpose for reading is to identify and recall concepts and supporting details.

3) Organizes own thoughts by outlining

OBJECTIVE

Given an oral or written assignment when appropriate the child organizes his thoughts by developing an outline.

NOTE: Assessment of the objective must be done informally over an extended period of time.

c. Summarizes material

1) Writes brief summaries of stories and expository material

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to write concise, two- to five-sentence summaries of story--and expository materials--i.e., five or more paragraphs; 1000 words or more.

2) States important points expressed in discussion

OBJECTIVE

Having listened to or participated in a discussion, the child is able to identify the major issue and objectively specify the main points of view expressed.

8. Evaluates information

a. Realizes printed statements may be either fact or opinion

OBJECTIVE

Given statements in or out of context, the child is able to make valid judgments as to whether the statements represent fact or opinion. [Given a passage like the following, the child indicates statements that represent opinion:

> Television is used as a means of education. Telecasts from the United Nations and news about important issues make many people aware of what's going on in the world. Many children watch special TV programs in school.]

b. Checks statements with those in other sources to evaluate validity

OBJECTIVE

When confronted with questionable statements and/or controversial points of view, the child seeks further information from varied sources in order to check their validity.

NOTE: Assessment of this objective is most realistically based upon observations over a period of time. Recognition of questionable or controversial statements is implicit in the objective and this recognition proceeds from the child's ability to see statements as fact or opinion, which is the focus of the preceding objective.

c. Evaluates information in terms of his own experience and/or known facts

OBJECTIVE

The child relates new information to his personal experiences and/or known facts, and evaluates both the new information and the past experiences and knowledges in terms of the relationship.

NOTE: Assessment of this objective is most realistically based on observations over a period of time. One basis for assessment would be observations of reactions to commercial advertisements of products with which the child has had experience: The child should be able not only to criticize in terms of his personal experience but also to re-evaluate his past observations in light of new information, e.g., note when a product had been inappropriately used, recognize unrealistic expectations.

d. Evaluates relevancy of materials to topics

OBJECTIVE

Given an assigned list of topics, the child is able to choose from among available sources those that are likely to include relevant information on specific topics.

e. Compares various viewpoints on the same topic

OBJECTIVE

Given expository selections written from two or more points of view but regarding a single topic, the child is able to (a) detect inconsistencies and (b) recognize probable sources of bias in each selection.

f. Identifies propaganda

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to recognize the classic--i.e., testimonial, band wagon, plain folks, card stacking, transfer--propaganda techniques used when they are used in persuasive writing.

9. Follows directions

OBJECTIVE

The child is able to (a) remember and follow a series of directions in sequence, (b) generalize from directions for one task to a similar task, and (c) follow written directions in independent work.

NOTE: The objective is the same as at Level D. The complexity of directions would, of course, increase from level-to-level.

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DETERMINING READING LEVELS OF ADULT STUDENTS

Prepared for presentation at the Adult Basic Education Conference sponsored by the State Department of Education and the University of Missouri-Kansas City, Jefferson City, Missouri, August 13-14, 1970.

The assigned topic "Determining Reading Levels of Adult Students" certainly sounds pretty straightforward -- dull, but clear-cut. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. A treatment of the topic may be dull to someone not caught-up in adult literacy work, but there is nothing clear-cut or simple about the problems implicit in determining reading levels of adults.

Why Determine Reading Level?

A good place to begin is to raise the question 'Why bother to talk about determining reading levels? Why is it so important?

The determination of the reading level of adult students is an essential part of adult basic education for a number of reasons. First, and most obvious, is that we must know what our students can do before we can design programs to meet their needs or legitimately accept them in our existing programs. The teachers look pretty foolish in some ABE programs I have observed where they are trying to teach first grade phonics skills to adults who can read Ebony magazine with no trouble at all. Just as foolish, are the teachers using machines meant to improve the reading speed of college students with adults who could not read fluently from a primary grade text.

Secondly, we must be able to gauge fairly accurately what the students can do at the beginning of our work with them and at various stages of our programs or we have no basis for substantiating that we are, in fact, doing anything for them, at least from a reading improvement or literacy standpoint. Here again my observation has shown that in many of our adult literacy programs the key to how long a student stays in a program is dependent upon how long his stamina keeps him there before he finally gives up. He may quit, feeling that he is in no way better off after weeks or months of enduring a program than he was before he started in it. That is tragic and unnecessary.

A third,and very important reason to a reading specialist, is the contribution that determining reading level makes to carrying out a rational approach to reading improvement. That basic strategy or premise in teaching reading is that there is an optimal level or range of reading materials for any student, around which directed practice and skills training ought to be centered in order to lead to improvement. Pitching the practice and training at too low a level results in no improvement. Centering practice and training around the use of overly difficult materials may lead to the needless further handicapping of the student through the reinforcing of bad habits such as word-by-word reading, too many eye regressions, the skipping of unrecognized words, and a reluctance on his part to engage in reading at all unless under the direct prodding of a teacher.

How Can You Determine Reading Level?

The uninitiated teacher, that is the one who really never taught reading while thinking carefully about what he was doing, is prone to believe that the word "reading" as used in the phrases "reading level" or "reading test" or "teaching reading" has some absolute kind of a meaning. Many teachers would argue that the term "intelligence," for example, has no real meaning but is an artificially constructed concept, the meaning of which is based on the type of tests used to measure it. Ironically, these same teachers may never think to question how real the concept of "reading" is when we talk about sombody's "reading" level. In point of fact, a "reading level" is a very elusive thing to measure in anyone, child or adult. It becomes much more elusive for an adult for whom the graded ladder environment of the public school is in no way part of the real world in the sense that our society attempts to make a school grade something real in the child's world. How real is "reading level" in adult society when we can have a bank president who may have sixth grade level reading skills and no one knows or cares, while a young applicant for a teller's position in the bank, who may read at eleventh grade level, is turned away because he has not received a high school diploma.

Let us consider just a few of the ways we can measure reading. We can give a test called a reading test to our adult student. More than likely it will be a test normed on public school children that presents results in a grade equivalent score, indicating that the raw score earned by our adult is the average score of a school child at such-and-such a grade level. The route to the score is usually through responding to multiple choice questions. An individual skilled at matching words among the choice of answers with words appearing in part of the question can run up a good score without really reading anything. An example of this type of test item would be:

> Ohio is an Indian word which means "Beautiful River." Many of our states have Indian names. From what people do we get the word Ohio?
>
> Italian Spanish English Indian

The response is obvious, even for individuals who could not truly read anything.

Add to these types of items the liklihood that we may be giving our adult a test, where because of norms provided, the lowest score is a third grade or even a fifth grade equivalent. For every lucky guess on the test, our adult inflates his score to a higher grade performance. This problem with group administered standardized tests is greatest with older students taking tests consistent with their age but not consistent with their actual reading ability. A functionally illiterate adult, capable of only reading as a beginning third grader might read, may score as high as sixth or seventh grade level on any of several group administered reading tests.

> A way to catch this is for the examiner to look at percentile scores instead of grade equivalents and to consider suspect any GE's falling below the 25th percentile.

Related to this distortion brought about by trying to report test results is single scores, but in the other direction from the problem just presented, is the fact that some slow but accurate readers may come out with total scores that are very close to those made by the haphazard guesser. The reader who answers twenty items and has twenty correct is certainly a different kind of a reader than the one who responds to 36 items and has twenty correct, even though both may earn the same grade score. For this reason, in trying to interpret any group test results, the examiner should divide the number of correct items by the number attempted in order to secure a percent of accuracy figure. Our reader with 20 out of 20 was reading at 100 percent accuracy, while our "guesser" who had 20 out of 26 correct was reading only at a 55 percent accuracy level. This percent of accuracy figure must be taken into account in trying to understand the results of any group administered standardized tests.

Another approach to testing is to hand an individual reading passages of varying levels of difficulty and ask him to read them. He may be asked after silently reading each passage to answer direct questions over it or he may be asked after his reading is completed, "Tell me what you read," leaving the burden on him to remember what he did read, organize it, and relate it back without the help of questions. Results may be quite different, depending upon which approach is used to evaluate comprehension. The adult's reading might be timed and rate considered as a factor, or the time factor may be ignored altogether, depending upon the test and the tester. (I recommend that rate be considered one of the factors in evaluating silent reading, where time norms are available.)

The same testing strategy may be used while the adult reads passages aloud and the ease and fluency with which he reads may be judged. The mistakes he makes might even be recorded as they occur, so that they can be studied later in determining what the reader's strengths and weaknesses may be. Of course his comprehension is evaluated in oral reading also. (I recommend that rate norms generally be ignored in evaluating oral reading.)

Reading passages such as I have just described may be found in tests such as the Gray Oral Reading Paragraphs (revised, available from Bobbs-Merrill Publishers) or the Gilmore Oral Reading Test (revised, available from Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.).

There are other things that could be done also. Admittedly, such things are not usually done, but the adult could be handed a newspaper and asked to look at the grocery adds and tell the examiner where the best place is to buy meat this week. He could be handed the sports pages and asked to tell who won the ballgame between Pittsburg and Philadelphia last night. He could be handed the yellow pages and told to find a pediatrician to take a sick child to. He could be handed a do-it-yourself kit and told to put some object together following printed directions. All of these could be quite legitimate ways of determining the reading level of adult students in a particular type of program. All of them, however, are likely to give you differing results.

What Are the Levels of Adult Reading?

In the literature of adult basic education, it has become common practice to define four reading stages of adults. First is the introductory stage, which is the point at which adults are learning to read for the first time. At this stage the mechanics of reading are stressed and the adult's performance is comparable to that of standardized test grade equivalents for this range are 1.0 to 3.9. The elementary stage is the level at which adults have mastered most of the techniques necessary to pronounce printed words and their performance compares with that of children in grades four, five, and six. Group standardized grade equivalents for this range are 4.0 to 6.9. The third stage is a grade seven through nine level performance and is a transitional stage to mature adult reading ability. Grade equivalents are 7.0 to 9.9. The fourth stage, the developmental, is reached when an adult can read with ease and competence most of what he is likely to be called upon to read in our society. Public school norms here are grade equivalents from 10.0 to 12.0 plus. Actually, the mean reading level of all adults in this country is to be found in the low end of this range.

For those of you who may not be aware of it, let me point out that grade equivalent scores from standardized tests have never been synonymous with saying that an individual can read material of a certain graded level. In fact, an adult scoring a 5.0 grade equivalent on a test such as the Stanford Achievement or the California Reading Test, for example, is unlikely to be able to read fluently in a fifth grade textbook.

One reason a discussion of the determining of adult reading levels is such a fuzzy topic is that the grading of books is a very artificial and arbitrary kind of thing. There is no universally accepted standard for saying one book is a third level, another a fourth, and so on. Publishers do not all use the same standards and many of them do not even make known the criteria they use for assigning grade designations to their publications.

The Spache formula readibility for grade designations 1 through 3 and Dale-Chall formula designations for grades 4 through 6 discriminate material difficulty realistically in terms of how fluently a reader is likely to read and understand what he reads. You understand, of course, that differences between level two and level one passages are rather obvious and dramatic. As reading levels go up in difficulty, differences become less obvious. Above sixth level, differences are rather arbitrary arithmetic formula differences. The difference between 6th and 8th or 8th and 10th is nowhere near as obvious as the difference between 1st and 2nd. At upper levels, then, it tends to become rather meaningless to talk about grade level differences.

Anti-poverty drive efforts of recent years are bringing out adults who fall in the introductory, elementary, and transitional stages, with the largest numbers, apparently, falling in the elementary range (grades four five, and six level performance). Any adult program where it is assumed all of the enrollment will be comprised of absolute illiterates will be aimed too low to be effective for most of the students. On the other hand, if the program is offered by teachers who are not qualified through training and experience to teach the smaller number of absolute illiterates who do turn out, it is likely that the program will be pitched at too high a level to be of benefit to the majority of the students. Even those who show a general proficiency in reading comparable to a fourth to sixth grader will be deficient in specific skills normally taught at the introductory stage.

Relating Testing to Teaching Reading

The classic way to teach reading to anyone, child or adult, is to place material in his hands that (1) is interesting to him; (2) is presented in a vocabulary that does not overtax his word recognition proficiency, and (3) contains concepts within his range of understanding.

The teacher strives to improve the learner's word recognition skills, expand his vocabulary, and develop his comprehension by relating instruction in these specific skill areas to reading which will meet some need of the learners or accomplish some purpose.

Analysis of this approach to teaching conveys very well the type of testing essential to good reading instruction. What is the right reading level for adult students? It is the level where he is interested in what he is reading, his skills in pronouncing words are not overtaxed, and he is able to understand the ideas that he is reading about.

There is one best way to find out what this level is. That is to ask the student to read both orally and silently in the actual material intended for instruction or reading development and check his feelings about it, his fluency in reading it, and the extent to which he appears to understand it. Unfortunately, that approach may not be feasible when you have large numbers of persons to group for instruction and have no prior knowledge of the levels at which these individuals may be likely to function. Immediately, we are faced with the primary issue we must face in all educational measurement...what are some second-best ways of making valid judgments about placement for instruction and direction for teaching that are not time consuming and costly?

My opinion is that the job of determining the reading level of adult students cannot really be done well with any single group administered silent reading test that is currently available, unless there is some prior information about the range the adult is likely to be operating within, such as beginning, elementary, transitional, or developmental level. In other words, there is no group test that can cover the range of possibilities and bracket with acceptable precision the level to which an adult ought to be assigned. My preference would be for a short, individually administered screening test used for preliminary placement purposes. Such a test should begin with the adult being asked to respond to a list of words graduated as to difficulty. The point at which he becomes frustrated on the word list should cue the examiner to the level of paragraphs which the student should be asked to read orally and respond to questions. As a further check, the student should be asked to read silently passages comparable to those he read orally and his rate of reading should be checked and his recall assessed by asking him to state without benefit of questions what he has read.

The use of the word list serves two purposes. First, it is the quickest way to find out the range the student is likely to read without either having him start too low, reading insultingly simple passages, or too high, reading difficult and frustrating passages before dropping back down. Secondly, the student's performance on a list of words can be compared to his performance in reading contextual passages and indicate the degree to which context clues aid him in reading.

If the student reads from one record form while the examiner records responses and reading errors on another form, the test can be readministered later as a check on growth. The examiner can record the second time using a contrasting color ink or pencil from that used at the first testing. The comparisons become quite graphic showing whether change is occurring and to what degree.

Are such tests as I just described readily available? Not as available as they ought to be. In 1965, the Florida State Department of Education developed an uncopyrighted Informal Reading Inventory for Adults that had lists of 20 words at grade levels first through sixth, followed by reading passages with questions at levels one through six. I suspect that other projects have developed their own non-standardized screening tests but I am not aware of any I would recommend for adoption.

Some adult basic education programs use the Reading sub-test from the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), which provides a graduated list of words. This subtest can be quickly administered and scored, and based on its results, the adult student can be tested further with graded reading passages from a test such as Gray's Oral Reading Test (revised) or the Gilmore Oral Reading Test (revised).

A widely followed convention in screening adults in past years has been to give them a standardized reading test normed for intermediate grades, and subtract one from the grade equivalent score earned and call that the adult's reading level. This is about as crude a method as can be adopted and not one which I would endorse.

One of the major reasons I was asked to make this presentation was because of a testing instrument I developed for an Adult Basic Education project in Joliet, Illinois, in 1965. The test is called the Adult Basic Reading Inventory and after the project was published by Scholastic Testing Service, Inc. The objective behind this instrument was to construct a group test which incorporated some of the advantages of the types of individually administered tests I just described. The ABRI has five parts -- one which samples sight words of a first grade level; Part 2, which has 20 items to sample whether the student can use beginning consonants and consonant blends and digraphs in attaching words; Part 3, which tests the student's ability to come up with synonyms for words at 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade levels; Part 4, which tests the student's knowledge of these same words when they are read aloud by the teacher; and Part 5, which provides passages at 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade reading levels with accompanying comprehension questions. The test is meant to provide a distinction between adults who belong in the introductory group (1 through 3) and those who belong in the elementary group (4 through 6). Discrimination is possible only at the lower levels of reading performance. My hope was that the test would improve on the use of regular public school standardized achievement tests in adult basic education programs and help move adult educators in the direction of more meaningfully relating testing and instruction. Honestly, I am astonished that the test has survived the past five years and is still being used all over the country. It is an example of an instrument written for one program to begin with and only later published with a minimal amount of technical information for use in other projects where the need might be felt for such a test.

In the manual for the ABRI, the use of Informal Reading Inventories such as those just described is recommended. Also the practice of recording the errors which the reader makes, in an effort to gain some insight into his skill strengths and deficiencies and to give direction to teaching. Specific techniques for recording errors and analyzing their implications can be found in the manuals accompanying tests. The Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty (Harcourt, Brace and World) and the Gilmore and the Gray tests, already mentioned.

Concluding Statement

A statement I have read and heard occasionally at ABE meetings is that the techniques of remedial reading developed through the years are just not adaptable to adults. The impression is often left by some writers or speakers that there is a dramatically better way to do it than the way spelled out in the literature devoted to teaching reading to children. I have to take exception to that position, assuming some of my listeners here have embraced it. True, we need tests and materials that are directed to adult needs and interests, but the basic practices and techniques of a good remedial program for school children are not essentially different from those for a good ABE program. We may not have many good remedial reading programs for children around the country, but the better ones do point the direction for sound adult programs. Adults in ABE programs are remedial reading cases. Very few of them that any of you are working with are coming to you without having been exposed to some prior reading instruction. I suggest to you that a large percentage of them have failed to learn in previous situations which their peers have learned to read.

In concluding, I would leave you with this brief list of characteristics of a good testing program as it relates to literacy work in adult basic education.

In a good reading program for adults...

(1) efforts are made to determine the reading level of students at entry to the program through the individual testing of both oral and silent reading performance.

(2) the results of group administered tests, when used to provide objective evidence that measurable growth has occurred, are related to evidence that developed reading skills are being applied in functional reading situations.

(3) adult students are involved in setting their own short-range and long-range objectives and, through continuing evaluation, shown their progress toward them.

(4) testing of adults, which does not provide results translatable by teachers into instructional implications, is kept to the barest possible minimum.

(5) teachers and program alike are continuously evaluated on the basis of whether the adult students demonstrate improved reading competencies at the conclusion of their term in the program.

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August, 1970

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING ADULTS READING

After making a presentation at the University of Tennessee on motivating adults to learn to read, I was told by an ABE Institute participant that my approach was an adult education approach to reading instruction. I asked myself and then my friend what an adult education approach to reading instruction was, exactly. After pursuing the point for some time, my Institute friend and I determined that an adult education approach to reading instruction was one in which the instructor carefully controls the learning environment, meets as many basic physiological and psychological needs as possible, structures the learning steps of reading so that there is almost invariably no failure of any kind, whatsoever, and uses an approach to teaching reading which is relevant to both the adult's language and experience. I am most grateful to my friend for providing many of the following suggestions and techniques for an adult education approach to reading instruction.

Adjusting the Learning Environment

Two major aspects of the learning environment must be controlled by the adult educator who wishes to teach adults reading or any other subject matter. The adult educator must control both the social and physical environment. The social environment can be controlled or, in other words, made conducive to learning by improving upon such factors as class size, peer relationships, grouping arrangements, teacher-learner relationship, and the effects of both social and physical rewards on the attitudes and the behavior of the adults toward themselves, one another, and to the educator.

Class size should be small enough so that the instructor can easily give one-to-one instruction. Adults who receive one-to-one reading instruction do significantly better in learning reading than do adults taught in groups. Therefore, instruction should be patterned so that each adult receives individual instruction during each learning session. Ideally, the adult should receive individualized instruction throughout most of each class session. Grouping the class of twenty into four groups of five each, into five groups of four each, into ten teams, etc. will enable the teacher to go from group-to-group providing individual instruction when needed. In the team approach, adults can help one another with learning. Another possibility is to enlist the voluntary assistance of housewives, church members, community group members, and other individuals so that each adult learner in the class has the undivided attention of an instructor much of the time he is studying reading.

The adult educator can provide a harmonious teaching-learning situation by assuming a completely positive reinforcing attitude and by insisting that volunteer tutors and class members do the same. By being the adult's friend rather than simply the adult's teacher and by rewarding socially and academically acceptable behavior and refusing to react to most socially and academically unacceptable behavior, the instructor shows the adult that learning to read provides continual social rewards as well as intrinsic rewards which may apply to the situation.

Furthermore, whenever adult learners are given encouragement to learn to read in the form of praise, smiles, nods, marks, and other means, care must be taken to see that other adults in the group are given a similar amount of reinforcement. Even the slowest adult in the class should be rewarded for even the slightest progress in learning. Studies indicate that when slower individuals receive fewer rewards than faster individuals in the group, the slower individuals do not perform as well as they could. Therefore, rewards should be provided on the basis of effort regardless of ability and should be distributed equiponderately to members of the group. No adult learner should ever feel that he is "losing the reading learning game" to other members of the group. He must achieve success initially in his learning and then be given every indication possible that he is succeeding to learn to read. Competition, except with one's own records, is tabu in adult education.

The physical environment within which the adult receives his reading instruction should also be a source of positive reinforcement. When the adult associates an attractive physical environment with instruction inreading, the learning of reading will be enhanced. The room, the books and other instructional media, the tables and chairs, the desks, the bulletin boards, the windows, the lighting, the room temperature, the sounds and sound level, the attire of the teacher, and whatever physical rewards the teacher may introduce into the teaching-learning situation, all will affect to some degree the learning of reading. An attractive, physically comfortable, well-illuminated room with colorful walls and bulletin boards, as well as an attractively dressed teacher will have a positive effect on the learning of reading. The adult learner should also have the opportunity to work with an abundance of attractive books and other media relevant to his interest and to his language and experience. The use of only one book or the use of books and other media with which the adult has difficulty relating can only stifle interest in learning to read. The reading skills which adults are able to learn by perusing easy-to-read reading materials of all kinds (magazines, newspapers, handbooks, guidebooks, manuals, pamphlets, paperbacks, etc.) may well surpass the number of skills learned in the more conventional skill-type material.

Meeting Needs Before Teaching Reading

According to Abraham Maslow of Harvard, before much learning of any kind can take place, certain basic needs must be satisfied. These needs are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Once these needs are satisfied, the adult learner will be able to satisfy his need for cognitive development, or in our case, the learning of reading. In other words, before the first step in reading instruction is taken, the adult educator should determine to the best of his ability that the adult learner is physiologically fit, is neither ill, tired, thirsty, nor hungry, and has had other bodily comforts satisfied. Further, the adult should feel secure and unthreatened in the teaching-learning situation. He should also realize a sense of belonging both within and outside the group in which he is being taught. Constantly, the adult learner should have his esteem as a group member heightened and he should feel that he is a worthwhile member of the group just because he is himself, not necessarily because he has accomplished something. Finally, the adult learner should receive continual encouragement while learning reading and while developing other capabilities which may or may not be related to academic or vocational material.

Once the above needs have been met, the adult educator can proceed with his instruction in reading. When instruction proceeds before the above needs are met, however, the ability of the adult learner to learn reading will be hampered accordingly.

Structuring the Steps in Reading Instruction

In reading instruction for adults, as with most other types of instruction, it is better to move too slowly than too quickly with the instructional steps. As long as the adult learner continues to be successful in his academic pursuit to learn reading, there will be nothing in this sequential learning area which will discourage him from continuing to learn more reading. The steps in reading skill development should be programmed for each adult in the class. What this means is that the reading skills which the adult must learn are determined by informal measures such as the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI), the skills are taught at a speed which suits the particular adult learner, the IRI is readministered to determine if the skills have actually been learned, and if necessary, further instruction is provided to teach the reading skills not yet learned. This test-teach-retest-teach procedure is continued, but of course after each unsuccessful attempt to teach a particular skill the adult educator examines his procedures or techniques, scrutinizes the learning environment, determines whether all basic needs have been met, adds to or restructures the instructional steps intended to teach the particular skill, and then may even try a totally different approach for teaching the particular skill.

The diagnostic teaching of reading procedure described above will be possible only if certain prerequisite conditions and learnings are obtained or established by the adult educator. The adult educator must provide a learning environment similar to the one described above; he must be sensitive to and able to meet basic needs which many adults bring to the teaching-learning situation; he must be flexible enough in his approach to teaching reading so that he can restructure the steps in reading instruction to meet individual adult learning styles; and of course he must be able to administer the Informal Reading Inventory, recognize the reading skill weaknesses uncovered by the IRI, and know a number of different approaches to teaching reading skills so that if one approach or combination of approaches fails, he may try other approaches or a different combination of approaches with the particular adult.

The adult educator must also be familiar with a wide variety of recreational and vocational reading materials of varying interest levels and range of readability levels. Many times reading skills which may take months to teach in class can be learned by the adult simply by his reading of material which is vitally interesting to him. What better way is there, for example, to teach such comprehension skills as main idea, details, thought sequence, making inferences, etc. than to have the adult learner read an abundance of vitally important material at, or somewhat below, his reading level?

In addition, the adult educator should be familiar with instructional or learning materials in reading which can be used by the adult learner on an individual basis and which would meet the particular range of interest, abilities, and reading needs which may be encountered in the adult education class. Care should also be taken to provide the adult learner with materials which he will have little or no difficulty completing and materials in which he will experience no failure. A readability check of the material so as to be certain that the readability level of the material is below the adult learner's reading level may be necessary for both recreational reading material and instructional reading material. Since a tutor or adult educator will not always be with the adult learner to provide on-the-spot restructuring of the learning steps within the instructional material, the adult educator should be assured that the adult learner can complete every step in the material both correctly and completely.

Relating Instruction to Language and Experience

While the items discussed above are necessary techniques and procedures for providing meaningful reading instruction to adults, only when the reading instruction is related to the language and the experience of the adult will the instruction be truly meaningful. Like the weather about which everyone talks and about which no one seems to do anything, adult reading materials and methods are criticized for not beging relevant to the language and experience of the adults for which they are intended: Now, however, adult educators can stop talking about irrelevant adult reading instruction methods and materials and can do something about the situation which exists in many adult education classrooms.

In some adult education classrooms, for example, adults sit glassy-eyed in front of viewing screens on which are flashed irrelevant numbers or irrelevant stories about which the adult learners would find it difficult to care any less. Books with illustrations and stories far removed from the experiences of the adult learners are also found, and worse, are used in many adult education classrooms. Also, "book talk" or "middle-class talk," and unrealistic dialogue are found in much of the reading material used in classes for adults. But the situation is changing! With a little searching, the adult educator can find recreational and vocational reading material and reading instruction material with which the adult learner can easily relate.

The best source of reading instruction material is the adult learner himself. By recording the experiences of the adult learner in his own language the adult educator is providing highly stimulating reading material from which the entire scope and sequence of reading skills can be taught. In addition, from his own stories the adult can develop speaking, listening, and writing skills as well as skill in reading.

The only catch is that the adult educator and tutors must learn how to use the language-experience approach (a skill, I believe, only a precious few adult educators can now exercise effectively.) The approach is not a difficult one to learn, as the 1970 UMKC A.B.E. Institute group will attest, but there are some rules of thumb and procedures which are necessary to make the approach effective.

The procedure will vary depending upon the sophistication of the adult learner and his present knowledge of reading, but the approach can be used with any adult who knows both the upper case and lower case letters and who also knows that a word is a word. First, rapport must be established with the adult learner and the above considerations concerning the learning environment, needs, steps in reading instruction, and the relating of instruction to the adult's language and experience must be observed. Then the adult educator encourages the adult learner to discuss an actual past experience or to describe something that is happening at the moment. Each important sentence is repeated over and over again by the adult learner while the adult educator records the sentences in manuscript on a piece of paper in front of the adult. After the sentence is finally recorded the adult learner is asked to read the sentence, is then asked to read random words from the sentence, and finally reads the entire sentence again and later any preceding sentences. The adult learner is reminded always to read the way he talks.

After a sufficient number of sentences are recorded in the above manner, which depends on the sophistication of the learner (see Structuring the Steps in Reading Instruction above), the adult learner is asked to give his story a title. By so doing, the adult learner is further developing an important comprehension skill, i.e., determining the main idea in a piece of writing. The same procedure is followed in recording the title of the story as was followed in recording the sentences in the story. Finally, the adult learner reads the title and the entire story after which he makes his own copy of the story in manuscript. The copy which is made is then read aloud and illustrated with a sketch or perhaps an illustration from a magazine. This story is reviewed at subsequent class sessions and further language experience stories are added to the collection.

The above technique for relating reading instruction to the language and experience of the adult learner can be used successfully by anyone who takes time to experiment with the outlined procedure. Other techniques involving the teaching of isolated whole words, teaching of phonics, using the linguistic aproach, and applying the VAKT (visual-auditory-kinesthetic-tactile) approach either do not lend themselves to the objective of relating reading instruction to language and experience (i.e. phonics and linguistic approaches) or have been found relatively ineffective in teaching adults to read (i.e., whole word and VAKT approaches). Furthermore. by using the language experience or experiece story approach both word recognition and comprehension skills can be taught from the meaningful context of the adult learner's own stories.

The other approaches listed may be used part of the time to meet specific reading needs of certain adults, but the approach which my friend from Tennessee and I decided was more in keeping with an adult education approach to reading instruction was the language experience approach. In any event, adult educators everywhere must either begin or continue their adult education approach to reading instruction by actively adjusting the learning environment, meeting needs before teaching reading, carefully structuring the steps in reading instruction and relating reading instruction to the language and experience of each adult learner who enters the classroom.

The Selection and Use of Adult Reading Materials

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Introduction

During the past seven years I have been involved in the evaluation and development of basic reading materials for adults. The condition of this period of time has offered me the opportunity to observe a variety of materials being used under many different teaching conditions. From these experiences, it appears that several general conclusions can be drawn. One, no one method or material will work with all adults. Two, many of the basic reading materials on the market today are not applicable to the population being taught. Three, teachers who have been trained to teach children many times have difficulties adapting their techniques to teaching adults. This last generalization is probably more of an indictment of teacher education institutions rather than individual teachers, because there appears to be a variety of questions regarding the validity of teacher education institutions sequentially providing experience that will assist teachers in becoming competent to teach any age level.

The primary purpose of this paper is to stimulate your thinking regarding the process used in selecting materials for teaching adults reading. The concept of selecting materials to fit the individuals involved in the program should be foremost in each teacher's or administrator's mind. Even though this is a rather obvious concept, when one looks at the process used in the public schools to adapt youngsters to the reading materials available one can see how this can carry over to adult education. Therefore, any time adult education teachers can be reminded or remind themselves that the materials are only relevant as they relate to the particular populations they are teaching, hopefully, the materials will not play the primary role in dictating teaching strategies.

Material Selection

Certainly the foremost criterion in the selection of materials is the generalized reading level of the population to be taught. Even though this is obvious and seemingly rather easy to determine, the subtleties of this particular phase can destroy or cement the relationship between the teacher and student.

Teachers need to recognize that:

1. They are working with students who have experienced failure in the educational system of which the teachers have been an integral part. Therefore, to approach diagnosis or evaluation in a traditional manner is to almost insure further failure.

2. Formal standardized tests are of little or no initial value, again because they are perceived as a functional part of their failure system.

3. Informal tests or having to read aloud can be a very frustrating experience for adults who read at the basic levels.

With these recognitions the process that appears to be most efficient and effective is spending some time in discussion with students. This time can often assist in the development of a degree of personal closeness and awareness. Then through informal reading inventories attempt to establish a reading level.

Certainly one of the major issues regarding material selection and use is whether the student has mastered the basic word attack skills for decoding. If these deficiencies can be diagnosed through the initial screening process, then material selections become more effective.

Why do positions for teaching reading exist in Adult Basic Education? If teachers take the time to examine the purpose for their students attending this type of program, material selections become more relevant.

The purposes for attending a program of this type seem to fall into two general categories.

1. Pragmatic: If one wants mobility within the world of work he must have basic skills, therefore, many of the individuals who attend ABE are striving to maintain their present occupational position or are attempting to gain the skills necessary for upward mobility.

2. Personal: For a variety of reasons these individuals feel that their own personal worth will be elevated if they are able to successfully cope with the reading process. Even though these two general categories can only be separated for discussion purposes, students who feel that their personal worth is at stake in developing reading competancy are much more delicate and the material selection needs to be quite sensitive to this delicacy.

Education failure in center cities has brought home quite dramatically the need for awareness regarding previous life experiences. Certainly different materials are needed to work effectively with rural students as opposed to urban students. This does not imply that some materials are not cross-cultural or cross-experiential but some beginning reading materials that most clearly replicate the student's experiences are usually more acceptable to the student.

These are but a few of the student variables that should be examined before materials are selected, but one should recognize that the most dynamic variable in any teaching-learning situation is the human variable and if the ABE teacher is sensitive and aware he will be able to extend the ideas described previously to meet the needs of his particular classroom.

Material Evaluation

Before any materials are selected for a group, someone should determine the conditions and purposes for which the particular material was developed. For example to attempt to use Laubauch's system for teaching basic skills to all adults makes little or no sense. But to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of this system regarding background and learning styles and then adapting this system to populations as it makes sense is of great value to the student and teacher.

There are so many materials on the market today that cover a myriad of experiences and interest levels that it would be ludicrous for this paper to attempt to evaluate them all, but to be aware that the factors of interest and experience play a major role in reading is certainly quite important when selecting materials.

The paperback book era has added a new dimension to the teaching of reading. Today, any individual can have an instant library for a nominal expense. Individuals who have advanced beyond the basic skill development stages find that the use of paperbacks and newspapers play a major role in the facilitation of their reading interest.

Material Use

Obviously the unique way any one teacher uses a set of materials should be idiosyncratic to that particular individual, but there are certain guidelines of which all teachers should be aware. One, the materials or teacher guide should not be the sole determiner of how a particular material is to be used with a particular group of students, this should be determined through a cooperative knowledge of the materials and the population to be served. Two, the materials and curriculum should be devised and revised to account for the particular backgrounds and needs of the students to be taught during any particular session. In essence the curriculum should be fluid. Three, no materials should be used before the teacher is quite familiar with the material and the background of its development and intent.

Even though these generalized guidelines are rather obvious, many times a statement of the seemingly obvious provides greater insights. Even when each of the above stated guidelines can be adhered to; the most important aspect regarding the effective use of materials is a sensitive, aware teacher. Teachers at all levels, but particularly in teaching adults need to be able to break away from the authoritarian model. The teacher-student relationship used as a barrier between two individuals should be abolished. Simply stated, teachers have to feel secure within themselves before they can be a significant other in someone else's life.

Material Ideas

Since a variety of specific reading materials are available and the use of these materials is limited only by the creativeness of the teacher. The following ideas can be used as the beginning for more creative ideas:

1. Tape Recorders: The use of recorders in teaching reading extends beyond the decoding process. In fact, many of the language arts skills can be taught with this particular machine. Individuals can be afforded the opportunity of talking various life experiences into the recorder. This information can then be played back so each person can hear his language patterns, then the stories can be typed so a connection between the sound-symbol can be established. There are other ways this instrument can be used, but I feel that many of the uses should come from you.

2. Newspapers: Different geographical areas have a tendency to editorialize their newspapers in different ways. Since newspapers are usually written on from the 4th to 6th grade reading level, it makes a great deal of sense to use newspapers as a vehicle for teaching critical reading skills. Such things as determining the part of the country a particular newspaper comes from and then communicating the evidence within the paper to validate this determination.

3. Skill Development: Once skill deficiencies have been diagnosed the process of teaching the various skills should be diverse. One should be very careful not to be repetitious. Also teachers need to be aware of different learning styles and then try to match skill development materials to these various styles.

Summary

In summary, the following issues regarding the selection and use of materials seem important enough to reiterate.

1. Know your students as individuals. This knowing takes into consideration the individuals value system, his self concept, environmental influences and motivation for attending ABE.

2. Know the materials that are available for your use. Understand their original purpose, how have they been adapted for other purposes. Question the pragmatic validity of all materials.

3. One should have the sensitivity and ability to match the individual, method, and materials which seem to best suit each situation.

4. Examine self. If failure occurs, attempt to determine what role you as a teacher have played in this failure. Always keeping in mind that the human variable is probably the most dynamic variable in any learning situation.

5. Utilization of various techniques and methods. Do not get tied down to one particular technique, be willing to try new ideas and materials. Be flexible in your thinking and behavior.

Finally, all educators must recognize that at this point in time few specific answers regarding learning have been developed. In fact it appears that educators have not even asked appropriate questions. Hopefully, you will read this paper in a critical manner and glean from it any information that will assist you in becoming a more effective teacher.

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